THE Way of the World

A COMEDY.

As it is Acted at the

THEATRE in *Lincolns-Inn-Fields*,

BY

HIS MAJESTY's Servants.

Written by Mr. *CONGREVE*.

Audire est Operæ pretium, procedere recte
Qui mæchis non vultis——— Hor. Sat. 2. l. 1.
———*Metuat doti deprensa.*——— Ibid.

The SECOND EDITION, Reviſed.

LONDON:

Printed for *Jacob Tonſon*; and Sold by *James Knapton* at the *Crown* in St. *Paul's* Church-yard, *George Strahan* over against the Royal Exchange in *Cornhill*, and *Egbert Sanger* at the Poſt-Houſe near the *Temple*-Gate in *Fleetſtreet*. 1706.

To the Right Honourable

RALPH

Earl of *MOUNTAGUE*, &c.

My LORD,

WHether the World will arraign me of Vanity, or not, that I have presum'd to Dedicate this Comedy to Your Lordship, I am yet in Doubt: Tho' it may be it is some degree of Vanity even to doubt of it. One who has at any time had the Honour of Your Lordship's Conversation, cannot be suppos'd to think very meanly of that which he would prefer to your Perusal: Yet it were to incur the Imputation of too much Sufficiency, to pretend to such a Merit as might abide the Test of Your Lordship's Censure.

Whatever Value may be wanting to this Play while yet it is mine, will be sufficiently made up to it, when it is once become Your Lordship's; and it is my Security, that I cannot have over rated it more by my Dedication, than Your Lordship will dignifie it by Your Patronage.

That it succeeded on the Stage, was almost beyond my Expectation; for but little of it was prepar'd for that general Taste which seems now to be predominant in the Pallats of our Audience.

Those Characters which are meant to be ridicul'd in most of our Comedies, are of Fools so gross, that in my humble Opinion, they should rather disturb than divert the well-natur'd and reflecting Part of an Audience; they are rather Objects of Charity than Contempt; and instead of moving our Mirth, they ought very often to excite our Compassion.

This Reflection mov'd me to design some Characters, which should appear ridiculous not so much thro' a natural Folly (which is incorrigible, and therefore not proper for the Stage) as thro' an affected Wit; a Wit, which at the same time that it is affected,

is alſo falſe. As there is ſome Difficulty in the Formation of a Character of this Nature, ſo there is ſome Hazard which attends the Progreſs of its Succeſs, upon the Stage: For many come to a Play, ſo over-charg'd with Criticiſm, that they very often let fly their Cenſure, when through their Raſhneſs they have miſtaken their Aim. This I had occaſion lately to obſerve: For this Play had been acted two or three Days, before ſome of theſe haſty Judges cou'd find the leiſure to diſtinguiſh betwixt the Character of a *Witwoud* and a *Truewit*.

I muſt beg Your Lordſhip's Pardon for this Digreſſion from the true Courſe of this Epiſtle; but that it may not ſeem altogether impertinent, I beg, that I may plead the Occaſion of it, in part of that Excuſe of which I ſtand in need, for recommending this Comedy to Your Protection. It is only by the Countenance of Your Lordſhip, and the *Few* ſo qualify'd, that ſuch who write with Care and Pains can hope to be diſtinguiſh'd: For the Proſtituted Name of *Poet* promiſcuouſly levels all that bear it.

Terence, the moſt correct Writer in the World, had a *Scipio* and a *Lelius* if not to aſſiſt him, at leaſt to ſupport him in his Reputation: And notwithſtanding his extraordinary Merit, it may be, their Countenance was not more than neceſſary.

The Purity of his Stile, the Delicacy of his Turns, and the Juſtneſs of his Characters, were all of them Beauties, which the greater Part of his Audience were incapable of Taſting: Some of the courſeſt Strokes of *Plautus*, ſo ſeverely cenſur'd by *Horace*, were more likely to affect the Multitude; ſuch, who come with expectation to laugh out the laſt Act of a Play, and are better entertain'd with two or three unſeaſonable Jeſts, than with the artful Solution of the *Fable*.

As *Terence* excell'd in his Performances, ſo had he great Advantages to encourage his Undertakings; for he built moſt on the Foundations of *Menander*: His Plots were generally modell'd, and his Characters ready drawn to his Hand. He copied *Menander*; and *Menander* had no leſs Light in the Formation of his Characters, from the Obſervations of *Theophraſtus*, of whom he was a Diſciple; and *Theophraſtus* it is known was not only the Diſciple, but the immediate Succeſſor of *Ariſtotle*, the firſt and greateſt Judge of Poetry. Theſe were great Models to deſign by; and the further Advantage which *Terence* poſſeſs'd, towards giving his Plays the due Ornaments of Purity of Stile, and Juſtneſs of Manners, was not leſs conſiderable, from the Freedom of Converſation, which was permitted him with *Lelius* and *Scipio*, two

of

of the greateſt and moſt polite Men of his Age. And indeed, the Privilege of ſuch a Converſation, is the only certain Means of attaining to the Perfection of Dialogue.

If it has happen'd in any Part of this Comedy, that I have gain'd a Turn of Stile, or Expreſſion more Correct, or at leaſt more Corrigible than in thoſe which I have formerly written, I muſt, with equal Pride and Gratitude, aſcribe it to the Honour of Your Lordſhip's admitting me into Your Converſation, and that of a Society where every body elſe was ſo well worthy of You, in Your Retirement laſt Summer from the Town: For it was immediately after, that this Comedy was written. If I have fail'd in my Performance, it is only to be regretted, where there were ſo many, not inferior either to a *Scipio* or a *Lelius*, that there ſhou'd be one wanting equal to the Capacity of a *Terence*.

If I am not miſtaken, Poetry is almoſt the only Art, which has not yet laid Claim to Your Lordſhip's Patronage. Architecture, and Painting, to the great Honour of our Country, have flouriſh'd under Your Influence and Protection. In the mean time, Poetry, the eldeſt Siſter of all Arts, and Parent of moſt, ſeems to have reſign'd her Birth-right, by having neglected to pay her Duty to Your Lordſhip; and by permitting others of a later Extraction, to prepoſſeſs that Place in Your Eſteem, to which none can pretend a better Title. Poetry, in its Nature, is ſacred to the Good and Great; the Relation between them is reciprocal, and they are ever propitious to it. It is the Privilege of Poetry to addreſs to them, and it is their Prerogative alone to give it Protection.

This receiv'd Maxim, is a general Apology for all Writers who Conſecrate their Labours to great Men: But I could wiſh at this time, that this Addreſs were exempted from the common Pretence of all Dedications; and that as I can diſtinguiſh Your Lordſhip even among the moſt Deſerving, ſo this Offering might become remarkable by ſome particular Inſtance of Reſpect, which ſhou'd aſſure Your Lordſhip, that I am, with all due Senſe of Your extream Worthineſs and Humanity,

My LORD,

Your Lordſhip's moſt Obedient

and moſt Oblig'd Humble Servant,

Will. Congreve.

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. *Betterton.*

OF thoſe few Fools, who with ill Stars are curs'd,
Sure ſcribbing Fools, call'd Poets, fare the worſt.
For they're a ſort of Fools which Fortune *makes,*
And after ſhe has made 'em Fools, forſakes.
With Nature's *Oafs 'tis quite a diff'rent Caſe,*
For Fortune *favours all her* Idiot-Race:
In her own Neſt the Cuckow-Eggs *we find,*
O'er which ſhe broods to hatch the Changling-Kind.
No Portion for her own ſhe has to ſpare,
So much ſhe doats on her adopted Care.
Poets are Bubbles, by the Town drawn in,
Suffer'd at firſt ſome trifling Stakes to win:
But what unequal Hazards do they run!
Each time they write, they venture all they've won:
The 'Squire that's butter'd ſtill, is ſure to be undone.
This Author, heretofore, has found your Favour,
But pleads no Merit from his paſt Behaviour.
To build on that might prove a vain Preſumption,
Should Grants to Poets made, admit Reſumption:
And in Parnaſſus *he muſt loſe his Seat,*
If that be found a forfeited Eſtate.
He owns, with Toil, he wrought the following Scenes,
But if they're naught ne'er ſpare him for his Pains:
Damn him the more; have no Commiſeration
For Dulneſs on mature Deliberation.
He ſwears he'll not reſent one hiſs'd-off Scene,
Nor, like thoſe peeviſh Wits, his Play maintain,
Who, to aſſert their Senſe, your Taſte arraign.
Some Plot we think he has, and ſome new Thought;
Some Humour too, no Farce; but that's a Fault.
Satire, he thinks, you ought not to expect,
For ſo Reform'd a Town, who dares Correct?
To Pleaſe, this time, has been his ſole Pretence,
He'll not inſtruct, leſt it ſhould give Offence.
Should he by chance a Knave or Fool expoſe,
That hurts none here, ſure here are none of thoſe.
In ſhort, our Play, ſhall (with your leave to ſhew it)
Give you one Inſtance of a Paſſive Poet.
Who to your Judgments yields all Reſignation;
So Save or Damn, after your own Diſcretion.

EPI-

EPILOGUE

Spoken by Mrs. *Bracegirdle.*

After our Epilogue *this Crowd diſmiſſes,*
I'm thinking how this Play'll be pull'd to Pieces.
But pray conſider, e'er you doom its Fall,
How hard a thing 'twould be, to pleaſe you all.
There are ſome Criticks ſo with Spleen diſeas'd,
They ſcarcely come inclining to be Pleas'd:
And ſure he muſt have more than mortal Skill,
Who pleaſes any one againſt his Will.
Then, all bad Poets we are ſure are Foes,
And how their Number's ſwell'd the Town well knows:
In ſhoals, I've mark'd 'em judging in the Pit;
Tho' they're on no Pretence for Judgment fit
But that they have been Damn'd for Want of Wit.
Since when, they by their own Offences taught
Set up for Spies on Plays, and finding Fault.
Others there are whoſe Malice we'd prevent;
Such, who watch Plays, with ſcurrilous Intent
To mark out who by Characters *are meant.*
And tho' no perfect Likeneſs they can trace;
Yet each pretends to know the Copy'd Face.
Theſe, with falſe Gloſſes feed their own Ill-nature,
And turn to Libel, *what was meant a* Satire.
May ſuch malicious Fops *this Fortune find,*
To think themſelves alone the Fools *deſign'd:*
If any are ſo arrogantly Vain,
To think they ſingly *can ſupport a* Scene,
And furniſh Fool *enough to entertain.*
For well the Learn'd and the Judicious know,
That Satire *ſcorns to ſtoop ſo meanly low,*
As any one abſtracted Fop *to ſhow.*
For, as when Painters form a matchleſs Face,
They from each Fair One *catch ſome diff'rent Grace:*
And ſhining Features in one Portrait blend,
To which no ſingle Beauty muſt pretend:
So Poets oft, do in one Piece expoſe
Whole Belles Aſſembles *of* Coquets *and* Beaux.

Perſons

Perſonæ Dramatis.

MEN.

Fainall, In Love with Mrs. *Marwood*.	Mr. *Betterton*.
Mirabell, In Love with Mrs. *Millamant*.	Mr. *Verbruggen*.
Witwoud, *Petulant*, } Followers of Mrs. *Millamant*.	Mr. *Bowen*. Mr. *Bowman*.
Sir *Willfull Witwoud*, Half Brother to *Witwoud*, and Nephew to Lady *Wiſhfort*.	Mr. *Underhill*.
Waitwell, Servant to *Mirabell*.	Mr. *Bright*.

WOMEN.

Lady *Wiſhfort*, Enemy to *Mirabell*, for having falſly pretended Love to her.	Mrs. *Leigh*.
Mrs. *Millamant*, A fine Lady, Niece to Lady *Wiſhfort*, and loves *Mirabell*.	Mrs. *Bracegirdle*.
Mrs. *Marwood*, Friend to Mr. *Fainall*, and likes *Mirabell*.	Mrs. *Barry*.
Mrs. *Fainall*, Daughter to Lady *Wiſhfort*, and Wife to *Fainall*, formerly Friend to *Mirabell*.	Mrs. *Bowman*.
Foible, Woman to Lady *Wiſhfort*.	Mrs. *Willis*.
Mincing, Woman to Mrs. *Millamant*.	Mrs. *Prince*.

Dancers, Footmen, *and* Attendants.

SCENE *LONDON*.

The Time equal to that of the Preſentation.

THE

THE Way of the World.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Chocolate-House.

Mirabell *and* Fainall [*Rising from Cards.*] Betty *waiting.*

Mira. YOU are a fortunate Man, Mr. *Fainall.*

Fain. Have we done?

Mira. What you please. I'll play on to entertain you.

Fain. No, I'll give you your Revenge another time, when you are not so indifferent; you are thinking of something else now, and play too negligently; the Coldness of a losing Gamester lessens the Pleasure of the Winner: I'd no more play with a Man that slighted his ill Fortune, than I'd make Love to a Woman who undervalu'd the Loss of her Reputation.

Mira. You have a Taste extreamly delicate, and are for refining on your Pleasures.

Fain. Prithee, why so reserv'd? Something has put you out of Humour.

Mira. Not at all: I happen to be grave to Day; and you are gay; that's all.

Fain. Confess, *Millamant* and you quarrell'd last Night, after I left you; my fair Cousin has some Humours that wou'd tempt the Patience of a Stoick. What, some Coxcomb came in, and was well receiv'd by her, while you were by.

Mira. Witwoud and *Petulant*; and what was worse, her Aunt, your Wife's Mother, my evil Genius; or to sum up all in her own Name, my old Lady *Wishfort* came in.——

Fain. O there it is then——She has a laſting Paſſion for you, and with Reaſon.—What, then my Wife was there?

Mira. Yes, and Mrs. *Marwood* and Three or Four more, whom I never ſaw before; ſeeing me, they all put on their grave Faces, whiſper'd one another; then complain'd aloud of the Vapours, and after fell into a profound Silence.

Fain. They had a mind to be rid of you.

Mira. For which Reaſon I reſolv'd not to ſtir. At laſt the good old Lady broke thro' her painful Taciturnity, with an Invective againſt long Viſits. I would not have underſtood her, but *Millamant* joining in the Argument, I roſe and with a conſtrain'd Smile told her, I thought nothing was ſo eaſie as to know when a Viſit began to be troubleſome; ſhe reden'd and I withdrew, without expecting her Reply.

Fain. You were to blame to reſent what ſhe ſpoke only in Compliance with her Aunt.

Mira. She is more Miſtreſs of her ſelf, than to be under the neceſſity of ſuch a Reſignation.

Fain. What? tho' half her Fortune depends upon her Marrying with my Lady's Approbation?

Mira. I was then in ſuch a Humour, that I ſhou'd have been better pleas'd if ſhe had been leſs diſcreet.

Fain. Now I remember, I wonder not they were weary of you; laſt Night was one of their Cabal-Nights; they have 'em three times a Week, and meet by turns, at one another's Apartments, where they come together like the Coroner's Inqueſt, to ſit upon the murder'd Reputations of the Week. You and I are excluded; and it was once propos'd that all the Male Sex ſhou'd be excepted; but ſome body mov'd that to avoid Scandal there might be one Man of the Community; upon which Motion *Witwoud* and *Pelant* were enroll'd Members.

Mira. And who may have been the Foundreſs of this Sect? My Lady *Wiſhfort*, I warrant, who publiſhes her Deteſtation of Mankind; and full of the Vigour of Fifty five, declares for a Friend and *Ratafia*; and let Poſterity ſhift for it ſelf, ſhe'll breed no more.

Fain. The Diſcovery of your ſham Addreſſes to her, to conceal your Love to her Neice, has provok'd this Separation: Had you diſſembl'd better, Things might have continu'd in the State of Nature.

Mira. I did as much as Man cou'd, with any reaſonable Conſcience; I proceeded to the very laſt Act of Flattery with her, and

was

was guilty of a Song in her Commendation: Nay, I got a Friend to put her into a Lampoon, and complement her with the Imputation of an Affair with a young Fellow, which I carry'd ſo far, that I told her the malicious Town took notice that ſhe was grown fat of a ſudden; and when ſhe lay in of a Dropſie, perſuaded her ſhe was reported to be in Labour. The Devil's in't, if an old Woman is to be flatter'd further, unleſs a Man ſhou'd endeavour downright perſonally to debauch her; and that my Virtue forbad me. But for the Diſcovery of this Amour, I am indebted to your Friend, or your Wife's Friend, Mrs. *Marwood*.

Fain. What ſhould provoke her to be your Enemy, without ſhe has made you Advances, which you have ſlighted? Women do not eaſily forgive Omiſſions of that Nature.

Mira. She was always civil to me, 'till of late; I confeſs I am not one of thoſe Coxcombs who are apt to interpret a Woman's good Manners to her Prejudice; and think that ſhe who does not refuſe 'em ev'ry thing, can refuſe 'em nothing.

Fain. You are a gallant Man, *Mirabell*, and tho' you may have Cruelty enough, not to ſatisfie a Lady's longing; you have too much Generoſity, not to be tender of her Honour. Yet you ſpeak with an Indifference which ſeems to be affected; and confeſſes you are conſcious of a Negligence.

Mira. You purſue the Argument with a Diſtruſt that ſeems to be unaffected, and confeſſes you are conſcious of a Concern for which the Lady is more indebted to you than your Wife.

Fain. Fie, fie Friend, if you grow Cenſorious I muſt leave you, ——I'll look upon the Gameſters in the next Room.

Mira. Who are they?

Fain. *Petulant* and *Witwoud*—Bring me ſome Chocolate. [*Exit.*

Mira. *Betty*, what ſays your Clock?

Bet. Turn'd of the laſt Canonical Hour, Sir. [*Exit.*

Mira. How pertinently the Jade anſwers we! Ha? almoſt one a Clock! [*Looking on his Watch.*] O, y'are come——

Enter a Servant.

Well; is the grand Affair over? You have been ſomething tedious.

Serv. Sir, there's ſuch Coupling at *Pancras*, that they ſtand behind one another, as 'twere in a Country Dance. Ours was the laſt Couple to lead up; and no Hopes appearing of diſpatch, beſides, the Parſon growing hoarſe, we were afraid his Lungs would have fail'd before it came to our Turn; ſo we drove round to *Duke's-Place*; and there they were rivetted in a Trice.

Mira. So, ſo, you are ſure they are Married.

Serv. Married and Bedded, Sir: I am Witneſs.

Mira. Have you the Certificate?

Serv. Here it is, Sir.

Mira. Has the Taylor brought *Waitwell*'s Cloaths home, and the new Liveries?

Serv. Yes, Sir.

Mira. That's well. Do you go home again, d'ye hear, and adjourn the Conſummation 'till farther Order; bid *Waitwell* ſhake his Ears, and Dame *Partlet* ruſtle up her Feathers, and meet me at One a Clock by *Roſamond*'s Pond; that I may ſee her before ſhe returns to her Lady: And as you tender your Ears be ſecret.

[*Exit Servant.*

Re-Enter Fainall.

Fain. Joy of your Succeſs, *Mirabell*; you look pleas'd.

Mira. Ay; I have been engag'd in a Matter of ſome ſort of Mirth, which is not yet ripe for Diſcovery. I am glad this is not a Cabal-Night. I wonder, *Fainall*, that you who are Married, and of Conſequence ſhould be diſcreet, will ſuffer your Wife to be of ſuch a Party.

Fain. Faith, I am not Jealous. Beſides, moſt who are engag'd are Women and Relations; and for the Men, they are of a Kind too Contemptible to give Scandal.

Mira. I am of another Opinion. The greater the Coxcomb, always the more the Scandal: For a Woman who is not a Fool, can have but one Reaſon for aſſociating with a Man that is.

Fain. Are you Jealous as often as you ſee *Witwoud* entertain'd by *Millamant*?

Mira. Of her Underſtanding I am, if not of her Perſon.

Fain. You do her wrong; for to give her her Due, ſhe has Wit.

Mira. She has Beauty enough to make any Man think ſo; and Complaiſance enough not to contradict him who ſhall tell her ſo.

Fain. For a paſſionate Lover, methinks you are a Man ſomewhat too diſcerning in the Failings of your Miſtreſs.

Mira. And for a diſcerning Man, ſomewhat too paſſionate a Lover; for I like her with all her Faults; nay, like her for her Faults. Her Follies are ſo natural, or ſo artful, that they become her; and thoſe Affectations which in another Woman wou'd be odious, ſerve but to make her more agreeable. I'll tell thee, *Fainall*, ſhe once us'd me with that Inſolence, that in Revenge I took her to pieces; ſifted her and ſeparated her Failings; I ſtudy'd 'em, and got 'em by Rote. The Catalogue was ſo large, that I was not without Hopes, one Day or other to hate her heartily: To which

which end I ſo us'd my ſelf to think of 'em, that at length, contrary to my Deſign and Expectation, they gave me ev'ry Hour leſs and leſs Diſturbance; 'till in a few Days it became habitual to me, to remember 'em without being diſpleas'd. They are now grown as familiar to me as my own Frailties; and in all probability in a little time longer I ſhall like 'em as well.

Fain. Marry her, marry her; be half as well acquainted with her Charms, as you are with her Defects, and my Life on't, you are your own Man again.

Mira. Say you ſo?

Fain. I, I, I have Experience: I have a Wife, and ſo forth.

Enter Meſſenger.

Meſſ. Is one Squire *Witwoud* here?

Bet. Yes; What's your Buſineſs?

Meſſ. I have a Letter for him, from his Brother Sir *Wilfull*, which I am charg'd to deliver into his own Hands.

Bet. He's in the next Room, Friend—That way. [*Exit Meſſ.*

Mira. What, is the chief of that Noble Family in Town, Sir *Wilfull Witwoud*?

Fain. He is expected to Day. Do you know him?

Mira. I have ſeen him, he promiſes to be an extraordinary Perſon; I think you have the Honour to be related to him.

Fain. Yes; he is half Brother to this *Witwoud* by a former Wife, who was Siſter to my Lady *Wiſhfort*, my Wife's Mother. If you marry *Millamant* you muſt call Couſins too.

Mira. I had rather be his Relation than his Acquaintance.

Fain. He comes to Town in order to Equip himſelf for Travel.

Mira. For Travel! Why the Man that I mean is above Forty.

Fain. No matter for that; 'tis for the Honour of *England*, that all *Europe* ſhould know we have Blockheads of all Ages.

Mira. I wonder there is not an Act of Parliament to ſave the Credit of the Nation, and prohibit the Exportation of Fools.

Fain. By no means, 'tis better as 'tis; 'tis better to Trade with a little Loſs, than to be quite eaten up, with being overſtock'd.

Mira. Pray, are the Follies of this Knight-Errant, and thoſe of the Squire his Brother, any thing related?

Fain. Not at all; *Witwoud* grows by the Knight, like a Medlar graſted on a Crab. One will melt in your Mouth, and t'other ſet your Teeth on edge; one is all Pulp, and the other all Core.

Mira. So one will be Rotten before he be Ripe, and the other will be Rotten without ever being Ripe at all.

Fain. Sir *Wilfull* is an odd Mixture of Baſhfulneſs and Obſtina-

cy.—But when he's Drunk, he's as loving as the Monſter in the Tempeſt; and much after the ſame manner. To give the t'other his due; he has ſomething of good Nature, and does not always want Wit.

Mira. Not always; but as often as his Memory fails him, and his common Place of Compariſons. He is a Fool with a good Memory, and ſome few Scraps of other Folks Wit. He is one whoſe Converſation can never be approv'd, yet it is now and then to be endur'd. He has indeed one good Quality, he is not Exceptious; for he ſo paſſionately affects the Reputation of underſtanding Raillery; that he will conſtrue an Affront into a Jeſt; and call downright Rudeneſs and ill Language, Satire and Fire.

Fain. If you have a mind to finiſh his Picture; you have an Opportunity to do it at full length. Behold the Original.

Enter Witwoud.

Wit. Afford me your Compaſſion, my Dears; pity me, *Fainall*, *Mirabell*, pity me.

Mira. I do from my Soul.

Fain. Why, what's the Matter?

Wit. No Letters for me, *Betty?*

Bet. Did not the Meſſenger bring you one but now, Sir?

Wit. Ay, but no other?

Bet. No, Sir.

Wit. That's hard, that's very hard;—— A Meſſenger, a Mule, a Beaſt of Burden, he has brought me a Letter from the Fool my Brother, as heavy as a Panegyrick in a Funeral Sermon, or a Copy of Commendatory Verſes from one Poet to another. And what's worſe, 'tis as ſure a Forerunner of the Author, as an Epiſtle Dedicatory.

Mira. A Fool, and your Brother, *Witwoud*!

Wit. Ay, ay, my half Brother. My half Brother he is, no nearer upon Honour.

Mira. Then 'tis poſſible he may be but half a Fool.

Wit. Good, good *Mirabell*, *le Drole*! Good, good, hang him, don't let's talk of him;——*Fainall*, how does your Lady? Gad, I ſay any thing in the World to get this Fellow out of my Head. I beg Pardon that I ſhou'd ask a Man of Pleaſure, and the Town, a Queſtion at once ſo Foreign and Domeſtick. But I Talk like an old Maid at a Marriage, I don't know what I ſay: But ſhe's the beſt Woman in the World.

Fain. 'Tis well you don't know what you ſay, or elſe your Commendation wou'd go near to make me either Vain or Jealous.

Wit.

Wit. No Man in Town lives well with a Wife but *Fainall*: Your Judgment *Mirabell.*

Mira. You had better ſtep and ask his Wife; if you wou'd be credibly inform'd.

Wit. Mirabell.

Mira. Ay.

Wit. My Dear, I ask Ten Thouſand Pardons; —— Gad I have forgot what I was going to ſay to you.

Mira. I thank you heartily, heartily.

Wit. No, but prithee excuſe me, ——— my Memory is ſuch a Memory.

Mira. Have a care of ſuch Apologies, *Witwoud*; — for I never knew a Fool but he affected to complain, either of the Spleen or his Memory.

Fain. What have you done with *Petulant*?

Wit. He's reckoning his Mony, —— my Mony it was —— I have no Luck to Day.

Fain. You may allow him to win of you at Play; — for you are ſure to be too hard for him at Repartee: Since you monopolize the Wit that is between you, the Fortune muſt be his of Courſe.

Mira. I don't find that *Petulant* confeſſes the Superiority of Wit to be your Talent, *Witwoud.*

Wit. Come, come, you are malicious now, and wou'd breed Debates. —— *Petulant*'s my Friend, and a very honeſt Fellow, and a very pretty Fellow, and has a ſmattering —— Faith and Troth a pretty deal of an odd ſort of a ſmall Wit: Nay, I'll do him Juſtice. I'm his Friend, I won't wrong him neither. — And if he had but any Judgment in the World, —— he wou'd not be altogether contemptible. Come, come, don't detract from the Merits of my Friend.

Fain. You don't take your Friend to be over-nicely bred.

Wit. No, no, hang him, the Rogue has no Manners at all, that I muſt own —— No more Breeding than a Bum-baily, that I grant you, ——— 'Tis pity faith; the Fellow has Fire and Life.

Mira. What, Courage?

Wit. Hum, faith I don't know as to that, —— I can't ſay as to that. — Yes, faith, in a Controverſie he'll contradict any Body.

Mira. Tho' 'twere a Man whom he fear'd, or a Woman whom he lov'd.

Wit. Well, well, he does not always think before he ſpeaks; —— We have all our Failings; you are too hard upon him, you are faith. Let me excuſe him, — I can defend moſt of his Faults,

except

except one or two; one he has, that's the Truth on't, if he were my Brother, I cou'd not acquit him ——— That indeed I cou'd wiſh were otherwiſe,

Mira. Ay marry, what's that, *Witwoud?*

Wit. O pardon me ——— Expoſe the Infirmities of my Friend. ——No, my Dear, excuſe me there.

Fain. What I warrant he's unſincere, or 'tis ſome ſuch Trifle.

Wit. No, no, what if he be? 'Tis no matter for that, his Wit will excuſe that: A Wit ſhou'd no more be ſincere, than a Woman conſtant; one argues a Decay of Parts, as t'other of Beauty.

Mira. May be you think him too poſitive?

Wit. No, no, his being poſitive is an Incentive to Argument, and keeps up Converſation.

Fain. Too illiterate.

Wit. That! that's his Happineſs——His want of Learning, gives him the more Opportunities to ſhew his natural Parts.

Mira. He wants Words.

Wit. Ay; but I like him for that now; for his want of Words gives me the Pleaſure very often to explain his Meaning.

Fain. He's Impudent.

Wit. No, that's not it.

Mira. Vain.

Wit. No.

Mira. What, he ſpeaks unſeaſonable Truths ſometimes, becauſe he has not Wit enough to invent an Evaſion.

Wit. Truths! Ha, ha, ha! No, no, ſince you will have it,—I mean, he never ſpeaks Truth at all,——— That's all. He will lie like a Chambermaid, or a Woman of Quality's Porter. Now that is a Fault.

Enter Coachman.

Coach. Is Maſter *Petulant* here, Miſtreſs?

Bet. Yes.

Coach. Three Gentlewomen in the Coach would ſpeak with him.

Fain. O brave *Petulant*, Three!

Bet. I'll tell him.

Coach. You muſt bring Two Diſhes of Chocolate and a Glaſs of Cinnamon-water. [*Exit.*

Wit. That ſhould be for Two faſting Strumpets, and a Bawd troubled with Wind. Now you may know what the Three are.

Mira. You are very free with your Friend's Acquaintance.

Wit. Ay, ay, Friendſhip without Freedom is as dull as Love without Enjoyment, or Wine without Toaſting; but to tell you a Secret, theſe are Trulls that he allows Coach-hire, and ſomething more by the Week, to call on him once a Day at publick Places.

Mira. How!

Wit. You ſhall ſee he won't go to 'em becauſe there's no more Company here to take notice of him.——Why this is nothing to what he us'd to do;——Before he found out this way, I have known him call for himſelf——

Fain. Call for himſelf? What doſt thou mean?

Wit. Mean, why he wou'd ſlip you out of this Chocolate-houſe, juſt when you had been talking to him——As ſoon as your Back was turn'd——Whip he was gone;—Then trip to his Lodging, clap on a Hood and Scarf, and Mask, ſlap into a Hackney-Coach, and drive hither to the Door again in a trice; where he wou'd ſend in for himſelf, that I mean, call for himſelf, wait for himſelf, nay and what's more, not finding himſelf, ſometimes leave a Letter for himſelf.

Mira. I confeſs this is ſomething extraordinary——I believe he waits for himſelf now, he is ſo long a coming; O I ask his Pardon.

Enter Petulant.

Bet. Sir, the Coach ſtays.

Pet. Well, well; I come—Sbud a Man had as good be a profeſs'd Midwife as a profeſs'd Whoremaſter, at this rate; to be knock'd up and rais'd at all Hours, and in all Places. Pox on 'em I won't come.——D'ye hear, tell 'em I won't come.——Let 'em ſnivel and cry their Hearts out.

Fain. You are very cruel, *Petulant.*

Pet. All's one, let it paſs——I have a Humour to be cruel.

Mira. I hope they are not Perſons of Condition that you uſe at this rate.

Pet. Condition, Condition's a dry'd Fig, if I am not in Humour——By this Hand, if they were your——a——a——your What-dee-call-'ems themſelves, they muſt wait or rub off, if I want Appetite.

Mira. What-dee-call-'ems! What are they, *Witwoud*?

Wit. Empreſſes, my Dear——By your What-dee-call-'ems he means Sultana Queens.

Pet. Ay, *Roxolana's.*

Mira. Cry you Mercy.

Fain. Witwoud ſays they are——

Pet. What does he ſay th'are?

Wit. I; fine Ladies I ſay.

Pet. Paſs on, *Witwoud*——Harkee, by this Light his Relations—Two Coheireſſes his Couſins, and an old Aunt, that loves Catterwauling better than a Conventicle.

Wit. Ha, ha, ha; I had a Mind to ſee how the Rogue wou'd come off——Ha, ha, ha; Gad I can't be angry with him; if he ſaid they were my Mother and my Siſters.

Mira. No!

Wit. No; the Rogue's Wit and Readineſs of Invention charm me, dear *Petulant*.

Bet. They are gone, Sir, in great Anger.

Pet. Enough, let 'em trundle. Anger helps Complexion, ſaves Paint.

Fain. This Continence is all diſſembled; this is in order to have ſomething to brag of the next time he makes Court to *Millamant*, and ſwear he has abandon'd the whole Sex for her Sake.

Mira. Have you not left off your impudent Pretenſions there yet? I ſhall cut your Throat, ſometime or other *Petulant*, about that Buſineſs.

Pet. Ay, ay, let that paſs—There are other Throats to be cut.—

Mira. Meaning mine, Sir?

Pet. Not I——I mean no Body——I know nothing.—But there are Uncles and Nephews in the World——And they may be Rivals——What then? All's one for that——

Mira. How! Harkee *Petulant*, come hither——Explain, or I ſhall call your Interpreter.

Pet. Explain, I know nothing——Why you have an Uncle, have you not, lately come to Town, and lodges by my Lady *Wiſhfort*'s?

Mira. True.

Pet. Why that's enough—You and he are not Friends; and if he ſhou'd marry and have a Child, you may be diſinherited, ha?

Mira. Where haſt thou ſtumbled upon all this Truth?

Pet. All's one for that; why then ſay I know ſomething.

Mira. Come, thou art an honeſt Fellow *Petulant*, and ſhalt make Love to my Miſtreſs, thou ſha't, Faith. What haſt thou heard of my Uncle?

Pet. I, nothing I. If Throats are to be cut, let Swords claſh; ſnugs the Word, I ſhrug and am ſilent.

Mira. O Raillery, Raillery. Come, I know thou art in the Women's Secrets——What you're a Cabaliſt, I know you ſtaid

at

at *Millamant*'s laſt Night, after I went. Was there any Mention made of my Uncle, or me? Tell me; if thou hadſt but good Nature equal to thy Wit *Petulant*, *Tony Witwoud*, who is now thy Competitor in Fame, wou'd ſhew as dim by thee as a dead Whiting's Eye, by a Pearl of Orient; he wou'd no more be ſeen by thee, than *Mercury* is by the Sun: Come, I'm ſure thou wo't tell me.

Pet. If I do, will you grant me common Senſe then, for the future?

Mira. Faith I'll do what I can for thee; and I'll pray that Heaven may grant it thee in the mean time.

Pet. Well, harkee.

Fain. Petulant and you both will find *Mirabell* as warm a Rival as a Lover.

Wit. Pſhaw, pſhaw, that ſhe laughs at *Petulant* is plain. And for my part —— But that it is almoſt a Faſhion to admire her, I ſhou'd — Harkee ——— To tell you a Secret, but let it go no further — Between Friends, I ſhall never break my Heart for her.

Fain. How!

Wit. She's handſome; but ſhe's a ſort of an uncertain Woman.

Fain. I thought you had dy'd for her.

Wit. Umh ——— No ——

Fain. She has Wit.

Wit. 'Tis what ſhe will hardly allow any Body elſe —— Now, Demme, I ſhou'd hate that, if ſhe were as handſome as *Cleopatra*. *Mirabell* is not ſo ſure of her as he thinks for.

Fain. Why do you think ſo?

Wit. We ſtaid pretty late there laſt Night; and heard ſomething of an Uncle to *Mirabell*, who is lately come to Town, —— and is between him and the beſt part of his Eſtate; *Mirabell* and he are at ſome Diſtance, as my Lady *Wiſhort* has been told; and you know ſhe hates *Mirabell*, worſe than a Quaker hates a Parrot, or than a Fiſhmonger hates a hard Froſt. Whether this Uncle has ſeen Mrs. *Millamant* or not, I cannot ſay; but there were Items of ſuch a Treaty being in Embrio; and if it ſhou'd come to Life, poor *Mirabell* wou'd be in ſome ſort unfortunately fobb'd iſfaith.

Fain. 'Tis impoſſible *Millamant* ſhould harken to it.

Wit. Faith, my Dear, I can't tell; ſhe's a Woman and a kind of a Humoriſt.

Mira. And this is the Sum of what you cou'd collect laſt Night.

Pet. The Quinteſſence. May be *Witwoud* knows more, he ſtay'd longer —— Beſides they never mind him; they ſay any thing before him.

Mira. I thought you had been the greateſt Favourite.

Pet. Ay *teſte a teſte*; But not in publick, becauſe I make Remarks.

Mira. Do you.

Pet. Ay, ay, pox I'm malicious, Man. Now he's ſoft you know, they are not in awe of him —— The Fellow's well bred, he's what you call a — What-d'ye-call-'em. A fine Gentleman, but he's ſilly withall.

Mira. I thank you, I know as much as my Curioſity requires. *Fainall*, are you for the *Mall*?

Fain. Ay, I'll take a Turn before Dinner.

Wit. Ay, we'll all walk in the Park, the Ladies talk'd of being there.

Mira. I thought you were oblig'd to watch for your Brother Sir *Wilfull*'s Arrival.

Wit. No, no, he comes to his Aunt's, my Lady *Wiſhfort*; pox on him, I ſhall be troubled with him too; what ſhall I do with the Fool?

Pet. Beg him for his Eſtate; that I may beg you afterwards; and ſo have but one Trouble with you both.

Wit. O rare *Petulant*; thou art as quick as a Fire in a froſty Morning; thou ſhalt to the *Mall* with us; and we'll be very ſevere.

Pet. Enough, I'm in a Humour to be ſevere.

Mira. Are you; Pray then walk by your ſelves, —— Let not us be acceſſary to your putting the Ladies out of Countenance, with your ſenſeleſs Ribaldry; which you roar out aloud as often as they paſs by you; and when you have made a handſome Woman bluſh, then you think you have been ſevere.

Pet. What, what? Then let 'em either ſhew their Innocence by not underſtanding what they hear, or elſe ſhew their Diſcretion by not hearing what they would not be thought to underſtand.

Mira. But haſt not thou then Senſe enough to know that thou ought'ſt to be moſt aſham'd thy ſelf, when thou haſt put another out of Countenance.

Pet. Not I, by this Hand —— I always take Bluſhing either for a Sign of Guilt, or ill Breeding.

Mira. I confeſs you ought to think ſo. You are in the right, that you may plead the Error of your Judgment in defence of your Practice.

Where Modeſty's ill Manners, 'tis but fit
That Impudence and Malice paſs for Wit. [*Exeunt.*

ACT

ACT II. SCENE I.

St. James's Park.

Enter Mrs. Fainall *and Mrs.* Marwood.

Mrs. *Fain.* AY, ay, dear *Marwood*, if we will be happy, we muſt find the Means in our ſelves, and among our ſelves. Men are ever in Extreams; either doating or averſe. While they are Lovers, if they have Fire and Senſe, their Jealouſies are inſupportable: And when they ceaſe to Love, (we ought to think at leaſt) they loath; they look upon us with Horror and Diſtaſte; they meet us like the Ghoſts of what we were, and as ſuch fly from us.

Mrs. *Mar.* True, 'tis an unhappy Circumſtance of Life, that Love ſhou'd ever die before us; and that the Man ſo often ſhou'd out-live the Lover. But ſay what you will, 'tis better to be left, than never to have been lov'd. To paſs our Youth in dull Indifference, to refuſe the Sweets of Life becauſe they once muſt leave us; is as prepoſterous, as to wiſh to have been born Old, becauſe we one Day muſt be Old. For my part, my Youth may wear and waſte, but it ſhall never ruſt in my Poſſeſſion.

Mrs. *Fain.* Then it ſeems you diſſemble an Averſion to Mankind, only in compliance with my Mother's Humour.

Mrs. *Mar.* Certainly. To be free; I have no Taſte of thoſe inſipid dry Diſcourſes, with which our Sex of force muſt entertain themſelves, apart from Men. We may affect Endearments to each other, profeſs eternal Friendſhips, and ſeem to dote like Lovers; but 'tis not in our Natures long to perſevere. Love will reſume his Empire in our Breaſts, and every Heart, or ſoon or late, receive and readmit him as its lawful Tyrant.

Mrs. *Fain.* Bleſs me, how have I been deceiv'd! Why you profeſs a Libertine.

Mrs. *Mar.* You ſee my Friendſhip by my Freedom. Come, be as ſincere, acknowledge that your Sentiments agree with mine.

Mrs. *Fain.* Never.

Mrs. *Mar.* You hate Mankind.

Mrs. *Fain.* Heartily, Inveterately.

Mrs. *Mar.* Your Husband.

Mrs. *Fain.* Moſt tranſcendently; ay, tho' I ſay it, meritoriouſly.

Mrs. *Mar.* Give me your Hand upon it.

Mrs. *Fan.*

Mrs. *Fain.* There.

Mrs. *Mar.* I join with you; what I have ſaid has been to try you.

Mrs. *Fain.* Is it poſſible? Doſt thou hate thoſe Vipers Men?

Mrs. *Mar.* I have done hating 'em; and am now come to deſpiſe 'em; the next thing I have to do, is eternally to forget 'em.

Mrs. *Fain.* There ſpoke the Spirit of an *Amazon*, a *Pentheſilea*.

Mrs. *Mar.* And yet I am thinking ſometimes, to carry my Averſion further.

Mrs. *Fain.* How?

Mrs. *Mar.* Faith by Marrying; if I cou'd but find one that lov'd me very well, and would be throughly ſenſible of ill Uſage; I think I ſhou'd do my ſelf the Violence of undergoing the Ceremony.

Mrs. *Fain.* You would not make him a Cuckold?

Mrs. *Mar.* No; but I'd make him believe I did, and that's as bad.

Mrs. *Fain.* Why had not you as good do it?

Mrs. *Mar.* O if he ſhou'd ever diſcover it, he wou'd then know the worſt; and be out of his Pain; but I wou'd have him ever to continue upon the Rack of Fear and Jealouſie.

Mrs. *Fain.* Ingenious Miſchief! Wou'd thou wert married to *Mirabell*.

Mrs. *Mar.* Wou'd I were.

Mrs. *Fain.* You change Colour.

Mrs. *Mar.* Becauſe I hate him.

Mrs. *Fain.* So do I; but I can hear him nam'd. But what Reaſon have you to hate him in particular?

Mrs. *Mar.* I never lov'd him; he is, and always was inſufferably proud.

Mrs. *Fain.* By the Reaſon you give for your Averſion, one wou'd think it diſſembl'd; for you have laid a Fault to his Charge, of which his Enemies muſt acquit him.

Mrs. *Mar.* O then it ſeems you are one of his favourable Enemies. Methinks you look a little pale, and now you fluſh again.

Mrs. *Fain.* Do I? I think I am a little ſick o' the ſudden.

Mrs. *Mar.* What ails you?

Mrs. *Fain.* My Husband. Don't you ſee him? He turn'd ſhort upon me unawares; and has almoſt overcome me.

Enter Fainall *and* Mirabell.

Mrs. *Mar.* Ha, ha, ha; he comes opportunely for you.

Mrs. *Fain.* For you, for he has brought *Mirabell* with him.

Fain.

Fain. My Dear.

Mrs. *Fain.* My Soul.

Fain. You don't look well to Day, Child.

Mrs. *Fain.* D'ye think ſo?

Mira. He is the only Man that do's, Madam.

Mrs. *Fain.* The only Man that would tell me ſo at leaſt? and the only Man from whom I could hear it without Mortification.

Fain. O my Dear I am ſatisfy'd of your Tenderneſs; I know you cannot reſent any thing from me; eſpecially what is an effect of my Concern.

Mrs. *Fain.* Mr. *Mirabell*, my Mother interrupted you in a pleaſant Relation laſt Night: I wou'd fain hear it out.

Mira. The Perſons concern'd in that Affair, have yet a tolerable Reputation—I am afraid Mr. *Fainall* will be Cenſorious.

Mrs. *Fain.* He has a Humour more prevailing than his Curioſity, and will willingly diſpence with the hearing of one ſcandalous Story, to avoid giving an Occaſion to make another by being ſeen to walk with his Wife. This way Mr. *Mirabell*, and I dare promiſe you will oblige us both.

[*Exeunt Mrs.* Fainall *and* Mirabell.

Fain. Excellent Creature! Well ſure if I ſhou'd live to be rid of my Wife, I ſhou'd be a miſerable Man.

Mrs. *Mar.* Ay!

Fain. For having only that one Hope, the accompliſhment of it, of Conſequence muſt put an End to all my Hopes; and what a Wretch is he who muſt ſurvive his Hopes! Nothing remains when that Day comes, but to ſit down and weep like *Alexander*, when he wanted other Worlds to conquer.

Mrs. *Mar.* Will you not follow 'em?

Fain. Faith, I think not.

Mrs. *Mar.* Pray let us; I have a Reaſon.

Fain. You are not Jealous?

Mrs. *Mar.* Of whom?

Fain. Of *Mirabell.*

Mrs. *Mar.* If I am, is it inconſiſtent with my Love to you that I am tender of your Honour?

Fain. You wou'd intimate then, as if there were a fellow-feeling between my Wife and him.

Mrs. *Mar.* I think ſhe does not hate him to that degree ſhe wou'd be thought.

Fain. But he, I fear, is too Inſenſible.

Mrs. *Mar.* It may be you are deceiv'd.

Fain.

Fain. It may be ſo. I do not now begin to apprehend it.

Mrs. *Mar.* What?

Fain. That I have been deceiv'd Madam, and you are falſe.

Mrs. *Mar.* That I am falſe! What mean you?

Fain. To let you know I ſee through all your little Arts—— Come, you both love him; and both have equally diſſembl'd your Averſion. Your mutual Jealouſies of one another, have made you claſh 'till you have both ſtruck Fire. I have ſeen the warm Confeſſion red'ning on your Cheeks, and ſparkling from your Eyes.

Mrs. *Mar.* You do me wrong.

Fain. I do not—'Twas for my eaſe to overſee and wilfully neglect the groſs Advances made him by my Wife; that by permitting her to be engag'd, I might continue unſuſpected in my Pleaſures; and take you oftner to my Arms in full Security. But cou'd you think becauſe the nodding Husband would not wake, that e'er the watchful Lover ſlept!

Mrs. *Mar.* And wherewithall can you reproach me?

Fain. With Infidelity, with loving of another, with Love of *Mirabell.*

Mrs. *Mar.* 'Tis falſe. I challenge you to ſhew an Inſtance that can confirm your groundleſs Accuſation. I hate him.

Fain. And wherefore do you hate him? He is inſenſible, and your Reſentment follows his Neglect. An Inſtance? The Injuries you have done him are a Proof: Your interpoſing in his Love. What cauſe had you to make Diſcoveries of his pretended Paſſion? To undeceive the credulous Aunt, and be the officious Obſtacle of his Match with *Millamant?*

Mrs. *Mar.* My Obligations to my Lady urg'd me: I had profeſs'd a Friendſhip to her; and could not ſee her eaſie Nature ſo abus'd by that Diſſembler.

Fain. What, was it Conſcience then! Profeſs'd a Friendſhip! O the pious Friendſhips of the Female Sex!

Mrs. *Mar.* More tender, more ſincere, and more enduring, than all the vain and empty Vows of Men, whether profeſſing Love to us, or mutual Faith to one another.

Fain. Ha, ha, ha; you are my Wife's Friend too.

Mrs. *Mar.* Shame and Ingratitude! Do you reproach me? You, you upbraid me! Have I been falſe to her, thro' ſtrict Fidelity to you, and ſacrific'd my Friendſhip to keep my Love inviolate? And have you the Baſeneſs to charge me with the Guilt, unmindful of the Merit! To you it ſhou'd be meritorious, that I have been

been vicious. And do you reflect that Guilt upon me, which ſhould lie buried in your Boſom?

Fain. You miſinterpret my Reproof. I meant but to remind you of the ſlight Account you once could make of ſtricteſt Ties, when ſet in Competition with your Love to me.

Mrs. *Mar.* 'Tis falſe, you urg'd it with deliberate Malice—'Twas ſpoke in ſcorn, and I never will forgive it.

Fain Your Guilt, not your Reſentment, begets your Rage. If yet you lov'd, you could forgive a Jealouſie: But you are ſtung to find you are diſcover'd.

Mrs. *Mar.* It ſhall be all diſcover'd. You too ſhall be diſcover'd; be ſure you ſhall. I can but be expos'd—If I do it my ſelf I ſhall prevent your Baſeneſs.

Fain. Why, what will you do?

Mrs. *Mar.* Diſcloſe it to your Wife; own what has paſt between us.

Fain. Frenzy!

Mrs. *Mar.* By all my Wrongs I'll do't—I'll publiſh to the World the Injuries you have done me, both in my Fame and Fortune: With both I truſted you, you Bankrupt in Honour, as indigent of Wealth.

Fain. Your Fame I have preſerv'd. Your Fortune has been beſtow'd as the Prodigality of your Love would have it, in Pleaſures which we both have ſhar'd. Yet had not you been falſe, I had e'er this repaid it—'Tis true—had you permitted *Mirabell* with *Millamant* to have ſtoll'n their Marriage, my Lady had been incens'd beyond all Means of Reconcilement: *Millamant* had forfeited the Moiety of her Fortune; which then wou'd have deſcended to my Wife;——And wherefore did I marry, but to make lawful Prize of a rich Widow's Wealth, and ſquander it on Love and you?

Mrs. *Mar.* Deceit and frivolous Pretence.

Fain. Death, am I not Married? What's Pretence? Am I not Impriſon'd, Fetter'd? Have I not a Wife? Nay a Wife that was a Widow, a young Widow, a handſome Widow; and would be again a Widow, but that I have a Heart of Proof, and ſomething of a Conſtitution to buſtle thro' the Ways of Wedlock and this World. Will you yet be reconcil'd to Truth and me?

Mrs. *Mar.* Impoſſible. Truth and you are inconſiſtent—I hate you, and ſhall for ever.

Fain. For loving you?

Mrs. *Mar.* I loath the Name of Love after ſuch Uſage; and next to the Guilt with which you wou'd aſperſe me, I ſcorn you moſt. Farewell.

Fain. Nay, we muſt not part thus.

Mrs. *Mar.* Let me go.

Fain. Come, I'm ſorry.

Mrs. *Mar.* I care not——Let me go—Break my Hands, do ——I'd leave 'em to get looſe.

Fain. I would not hurt you for the World. Have I no other Hold to keep you here?

Mrs. *Mar.* Well, I have deſerv'd it all.

Fain. You know I love you.

Mrs. *Mar.* Poor diſſembling!——O that—Well, it is not yet—

Fain. What? What is it not? What is it not yet? It is not yet too late——

Mrs. *Mar.* No, it is not yet too late——I have that Comfort.

Fain. It is to love another.

Mrs. *Mar.* But not to loath, deteſt, abhor Mankind, my ſelf and the whole treacherous World.

Fain. Nay, this is Extravagance——Come I ask your Pardon ——No Tears——I was to blame, I cou'd not love you and be eaſie in my Doubts——Pray forbear——I believe you; I'm convinc'd I have done you wrong; and any way, ev'ry way will make amends;——I'll hate my Wife yet more, Dam her, I'll part with her, rob her of all ſhe's worth, and will retire ſomewhere, any where to another World, I'll Marry thee——Be pacify'd—'Sdeath they come, hide your Face, your Tears——You have a Mask, wear it a Moment. This way, this way, be perſuaded.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Mirabell *and Mrs.* Fainall.

Mrs. *Fain.* They are here yet.

Mira. They are turning into the other Walk.

Mrs. *Fain.* While I only hated my Husband, I could bear to ſee him, but ſince I have deſpis'd him, he's too offenſive.

Mira. O you ſhould hate with Prudence.

Mrs. *Fain.* Yes, for I have lov'd with Indiſcretion.

Mira. You ſhou'd have juſt ſo much Diſguſt for your Husband, as may be ſufficient to make you reliſh your Lover.

Mrs. *Fain.* You have been the Cauſe that I have lov'd without Bounds, and wou'd you ſet Limits to that Averſion, of which you have been the Occaſion? Why did you make me marry this Man?

Mira.

Mira. Why do we daily commit disagreeable and dangerous Actions? To save that Idol Reputation. If the Familiarities of our Loves had produc'd that Consequence, of which you were apprehensive, where could you have fix'd a Father's Name with Credit, but on a Husband? I knew *Fainall* to be a Man lavish of his Morals, an interested and professing Friend, a false and a designing Lover; yet one whose Wit and outward fair Behaviour, have gain'd a Reputation with the Town, enough to make that Woman stand excus'd, who has suffer'd her self to be won by his Addresses. A better Man ought not to have been sacrific'd to the Occasion, a worse had not answer'd to the Purpose. When you are weary of him, you know your Remedy.

Mrs. *Fain.* I ought to stand in some Degree of Credit with you, *Mirabell.*

Mira. In Justice to you, I have made you privy to my whole Design, and put it in your Pow'r to ruin or advance my Fortune.

Mrs. *Fain.* Whom have you instructed to represent your pretended Uncle.

Mira. Waitwell, my Servant.

Mrs. *Fain.* He is an humble Servant to *Foible* my Mother's Woman; and may win her to your Interest.

Mira. Care is taken for that —— She is won and worn by this time. They were married this Morning.

Mrs. *Fain.* Who?

Mira. Waitwell and *Foible.* I wou'd not tempt my Servant to betray me by trusting him too far. If your Mother, in hopes to ruin me, shou'd consent to marry my pretended Uncle, he might like *Mosca* in the *Fox*, stand upon Terms; so I made him sure before hand.

Mrs. *Fain.* So, if my poor Mother is caught in a Contract, you will discover the Imposture betimes; and release her by producing a Certificate of her Gallant's former Marriage.

Mira. Yes, upon Condition she consent to my Marriage with her Niece, and surrender the Moiety of her Fortune in her Possession.

Mrs. *Fain.* She talk'd last Night of endeavouring at a Match between *Millamant* and your Uncle.

Mira. That was by *Foible*'s Direction, and my Instruction, that she might seem to carry it more privately.

Mrs. *Fain.* Well, I have an Opinion of your Success; for I believe my Lady will do any thing to get a Husband; and when she has this, which you have provided for her, I suppose she will submit to any thing to get rid of him.

Mira. Yes, I think the good Lady would marry any thing that reſembl'd a Man, tho' 'twere no more than what a Butler could pinch out of a Napkin.

Mrs. *Fain.* Female Frailty! We muſt all come to it, if we live to be Old, and feel the craving of a falſe Appetite when the true is decay'd.

Mira. An old Woman's Appetite is deprav'd like that of a Girl ——'Tis the Green-Sickneſs of a ſecond Childhood; and like the faint Offer of a latter Spring, ſerves but to uſher in the Fall; and withers in an affected Bloom.

Mrs. *Fain.* Here's your Miſtreſs.

Enter Mrs. Millamant, Witwoud, *and* Mincing.

Mira. Here ſhe comes Ifaith full Sail, with her Fan ſpread and her Streamers out, and a Shoal of Fools for Tenders ——Ha, no, I cry her Mercy.

Mrs. *Fain.* I ſee but one poor empty Sculler; and he tows her Woman after him.

Mira. You ſeem to be unattended, Madam ——You us'd to have the *Beau-mond* Throng after you; and a Flock of gay fine Perrukes hovering round you.

Wit. Like Moths about a Candle ——I had like to have loſt my Compariſon for want of Breath.

Milla. O I have deny'd my ſelf Airs to Day. I have walk'd as faſt through the Croud——

Wit. As a Favourite in Diſgrace; and with as few Followers.

Milla. Dear Mr. *Witwoud*, Truce with your Similitudes: For I am as ſick of 'em——

Wit. As a Phyſician of a good Air ——I cannot help it, Madam, tho' 'tis againſt my ſelf.

Milla. Yet again! *Mincing*, ſtand between me and his Wit.

Wit. Do, Mrs. *Mincing*, like a Skreen before a great Fire. I confeſs I do blaze to Day, I am too bright.

Mrs. *Fain.* But dear *Millamant*, why were you ſo long?

Milla. Long! Lord, have I not made violent haſte? I have ask'd every living Thing I met for you; I have enquir'd after you, as after a new Faſhion.

Wit. Madam, Truce with your Similitudes ——No, you met her Husband and did not ask him for her.

Mira. By your leave *Witwoud*, that were like enquiring after an old Faſhion, to ask a Husband for his Wife.

Wit. Hum, a hit, a hit, a palpable hit, I confeſs it.

Mrs. *Fain.* You were dreſs'd before I came abroad.

Milla.

Milla. Ay, that's true —— O but then I had —— *Mincing*, what had I? Why was I ſo long?

Minc. O Mem, your Laſhip ſtaid to peruſe a Pacquet of Letters.

Milla. O ay, Letters—I had Letters—I am perſecuted with Letters—I hate Letters—No Body knows how to write Letters; and yet one has 'em, one does not know why——They ſerve one to pin up one's Hair.

Wit. Is that the way? Pray, Madam, do you pin up your Hair with all your Letters? I find I muſt keep Copies.

Milla. Only with thoſe in Verſe, Mr. *Witwoud.* I never pin up my Hair with Proſe. I think I try'd once, *Mincing.*

Minc. O Mem, I ſhall never forget it.

Milla. Ay, poor *Mincing* tift and tift all the Morning.

Minc. 'Till I had the Cramp in my Fingers, I'll vow Mem. And all to no purpoſe. But when your Laſhip pins it up with Poetry, it ſits ſo pleaſant the next Day as any Thing, and is ſo pure and ſo crips.

Wit. Indeed, ſo crips?

Minc. You're ſuch a Critick, Mr. *Witwoud.*

Milla. Mirabell, Did not you take Exceptions laſt Night? O ay, and went away——Now I think on't I'm angry——No, now I think on't I'm pleas'd——For I believe I gave you ſome Pain.

Mira. Does that pleaſe you?

Milla. Infinitely; I love to give Pain.

Mira. You would affect a Cruelty which is not in your Nature; your true Vanity is in the Power of pleaſing.

Milla. O I ask your Pardon for that——Ones Cruelty is ones Power, and when one parts with ones Cruelty, one parts with ones Power; and when one has parted with that, I fancy one's Old and Ugly.

Mira. Ay, ay, ſuffer your Cruelty to ruin the Object of your Power, to deſtroy your Lover——And then how vain, how loſt a Thing you'll be! Nay, 'tis true: You are no longer handſome when you've loſt your Lover; your Beauty dies upon the Inſtant: For Beauty is the Lover's Gift; 'tis he beſtows your Charms—Your Glaſs is all a Cheat. The Ugly and the Old, whom the Looking-glaſs mortifies, yet after Commendation can be flatter'd by it, and diſcover Beauties in it: For that reflects our Praiſes, rather than your Face.

Milla. O the Vanity of theſe Men! *Fainall*, d'ye hear him? If they did not commend us, we were not handſome! Now you muſt

muſt know they could not commend one, if one was not handſome. Beauty the Lover's Gift —— Lord, what is a Lover, that it can give? Why one makes Lovers as faſt as one pleaſes, and they live as long as one pleaſes, and they die as ſoon as one pleaſes: And then if one pleaſes one makes more.

Wit. Very pretty. Why you make no more of making of Lovers, Madam, than of making ſo many Card-matches.

Milla. One no more owes ones Beauty to a Lover, than ones Wit to an Eccho: They can but reflect what we look and ſay; vain empty Things if we are ſilent or unſeen, and want a Being.

Mira. Yet, to thoſe two vain empty Things, you owe two the greateſt Pleaſures of your Life.

Milla. How ſo?

Mira. To your Lover you owe the Pleaſure of hearing your ſelves prais'd; and to an Eccho the Pleaſure of hearing your ſelves talk.

Wit. But I know a Lady that loves talking ſo inceſſantly, ſhe won't give an Eccho fair play; ſhe has that everlaſting Rotation of Tongue, that an Eccho muſt wait 'till ſhe dies, before it can catch her laſt Words.

Milla. O Fiction; *Fainall*, let us leave theſe Men.

Mira. Draw off *Witwoud*. [*Aſide to Mrs.* Fainall.

Mrs. *Fain.* Immediately; I have a Word or two for Mr. *Witwoud*.

Mira. I would beg a little private Audience too ——

[*Exit* Witwoud *and Mrs.* Fainall.

You had the Tyranny to deny me laſt Night; tho' you knew I came to impart a Secret to you that concern'd my Love.

Milla. You ſaw I was engag'd.

Mira. Unkind. You had the leiſure to entertain a Herd of Fools; Things who viſit you from their exceſſive Idleneſs; beſtowing on your Eaſineſs that Time, which is the Incumbrance of their Lives. How can you find Delight in ſuch Society? It is impoſſible they ſhould admire you, they are not capable: Or if they were, it ſhould be to you as a Mortification; for ſure to pleaſe a Fool is ſome degree of Folly.

Milla. I pleaſe my ſelf —— Beſides, ſometimes to converſe with Fools is for my Health.

Mira. Your Health! Is there a worſe Diſeaſe than the Converſation of Fools?

Milla. Yes, the Vapours; Fools are Phyſick for it, next to *Aſſa-fætida*.

Mira.

Mira. You are not in a Courſe of Fools?

Milla. Mirabell, if you perſiſt in this offenſive Freedom—you'll diſpleaſe me——I think I muſt reſolve after all, not to have you ———We ſhan't agree.

Mira. Not in our Phyſick it may be.

Milla. And yet our Diſtemper in all likelihood will be the ſame; for we ſhall be ſick of one another. I ſhan't endure to be reprimanded, nor inſtructed; 'tis ſo dull to act always by Advice, and ſo tedious to be told of ones Faults——I can't bear it. Well, I won't have you *Mirabell*——I'm reſolv'd——I think——You may go——Ha, ha, ha. What would you give, that you could help loving me?

Mira. I would give ſomething that you did not know, I cou'd not help it.

Milla. Come, don't look grave then. Well, what do you ſay to me?

Mira. I ſay that a Man may as ſoon make a Friend by his Wit, or a Fortune by his Honeſty, as win a Woman with Plain-dealing and Sincerity.

Milla. Sententious *Mirabell!* Prithee don't look with that violent and inflexible wiſe Face, like *Solomon* at the dividing of the Child in an old Tapeſtry Hanging.

Mira. You are merry, Madam, but I would perſuade you for one Moment to be ſerious.

Milla. What, with that Face? No, if you keep your Countenance, 'tis impoſſible I ſhou'd hold mine. Well, after all, there is ſomething very moving in a love-ſick Face. Ha, ha, ha—— Well I won't laugh, don't be peeviſh——Heigho! Now I'll be melancholy, as melancholy as a Watch-light. Well *Mirabell*, if ever you will win me woo me now——Nay, if you are ſo tedious, fare you well;——I ſee they are walking away.

Mira. Can you not find in the variety of your Diſpoſition one Moment———

Milla. To hear you tell me *Foible*'s marry'd, and your Plot like to ſpeed——No.

Mira. But how you came to know it———

Milla. Unleſs by the help of the Devil, you can't imagine; unleſs ſhe ſhould tell me her ſelf. Which of the two it may have been, I will leave you to conſider; and when you have done thinking of that, think of me. [*Exit.*

Mira. I have ſomething more——Gone——Think of you! To think of a Whirlwind, tho' 'twere in a Whirlwind, were a Caſe

Caſe of more ſteady Contemplation; a very Tranquility of Mind and Manſion. A Fellow that lives in a Windmill, has not a more whimſical Dwelling than the Heart of a Man that is lodg'd in a Woman. There is no Point of the Compaſs to which they cannot turn, and by which they are not turn'd; and by one as well as another; for Motion not Method is their Occupation. To know this, and yet continue to be in Love, is to be made wiſe from the Dictates of Reaſon, and yet perſevere to play the Fool by the force of Inſtinct.——O here come my Pair of Turtles,—What, billing ſo ſweetly! Is not *Valentine*'s Day over with you yet?

Enter Waitwell *and* Foible.

Sirrah, *Waitwell*, why ſure you think you were marry'd for your own Recreation, and not for my Conveniency.

Wait. Your Pardon, Sir. With Submiſſion, we have indeed been ſolacing in lawful Delights; but ſtill with an Eye to Buſineſs, Sir. I have inſtructed her as well as I could. If ſhe can take your Directions as readily as my Inſtructions, Sir, your Affairs are in a proſperous way.

Mira. Give you Joy, Mrs. *Foible.*

Foib. O-las, Sir, I'm ſo aſham'd——I'm afraid my Lady has been in a Thouſand Inquietudes for me. But I proteſt, Sir, I made as much haſte as I could.

Wait. That ſhe did indeed, Sir. It was my Fault that ſhe did not make more.

Mira. That I believe.

Foib. But I told my Lady as you inſtructed me, Sir. That I had a proſpect of ſeeing Sir *Rowland* your Uncle; and that I wou'd put her Ladiſhip's Picture in my Pocket to ſhew him; which I'll be ſure to ſay has made him ſo enamour'd of her Beauty, that he burns with Impatience to lye at her Ladiſhip's Feet and worſhip the Original.

Mira. Excellent *Foible!* Matrimony has made you eloquent in Love.

Wait. I think ſhe has profited, Sir. I think ſo.

Foib. You have ſeen Madam *Millamant*, Sir?

Mira. Yes.

Foib. I told her, Sir, becauſe I did not know that you might find an Opportunity; ſhe had ſo much Company laſt Night.

Mira. Your Diligence will merit more——In the mean time—

[*Gives Mony.*

Foib. O dear Sir, your humble Servant.

Wait.

Wait. Spouſe.

Mira. Stand off Sir, not a Penny — Go on and proſper, *Foible* —— The Leaſe ſhall be made good and the Farm ſtock'd, if we ſucceed.

Foib. I don't queſtion your Generoſity, Sir: And you need not doubt of Succeſs. If you have no more Commands, Sir, I'll be gone; I'm ſure my Lady is at her Toilet, and can't dreſs 'till I come. —— O dear, I'm ſure that [*Looking out.*] was Mrs. *Marwood* that went by in a Mask; if ſhe has ſeen me with you I'm ſure ſhe'll tell my Lady. I'll make haſte home and prevent her. Your Servant Sir. B'w'y *Waitwell.* [*Exit* Foible.

Wait. Sir *Rowland* if you pleaſe. The Jade's ſo pert upon her Preferment ſhe forgets her ſelf.

Mira. Come Sir, will you endeavour to forget your ſelf —— and transform into Sir *Rowland.*

Wait. Why Sir; it will be impoſſible I ſhou'd remember my ſelf —— Marry'd, Knighted and attended all in one Day! 'Tis enough to make any Man forget himſelf. The Difficulty will be how to recover my Acquaintance and Familiarity with my former ſelf; and fall from my Transformation to a Reformation into *Waitwell.* Nay, I ſhan't be quite the ſame *Waitwell* neither — for now I remember me, I'm marry'd, and can't be my own Man again.

Ay there's my Grief; that's the ſad Change of Life;
To loſe my Title, and yet keep my Wife. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

A Room in Lady Wiſhfort's *Houſe.*

Lady Wiſhfort *at her Toilet,* Peg *waiting.*

Lady. MErciful, no News of *Foible* yet?

Peg. No, Madam.

Lady. I have no more Patience —— If I have not fretted my ſelf 'till I am pale again, there's no Veracity in me. Fetch me the Red —— the Red, do you hear, Sweet-heart? An errant Aſh colour, as I'm a Perſon. Look you how this Wench ſtirs! Why doſt thou not fetch me a little Red? Didſt thou not hear me, Mopus?

Peg. The red *Ratafia* does your Ladiſhip mean, or the Cherry-Brandy?

Lady. Ratafia, Fool. No, Fool. Not the *Ratafia*, Fool—Grant me Patience! I mean the *Spaniſh* Paper, Idiot, Complexion Darling. Paint, Paint, Paint, doſt thou underſtand that, Changeling, dangling thy Hands like Bobbins before thee. Why doſt thou not ſtir, Puppet? thou wooden Thing upon Wires.

Peg. Lord, Madam, your Ladiſhip is ſo impatient——I cannot come at the Paint, Madam; Mrs. *Foible* has lock'd it up, and carry'd the Key with her.

Lady. A Pox take you both——Fetch me the Cherry-Brandy then——[*Exit* Peg.]——I'm as pale and as faint, I look like Mrs. *Qualmſick* the Curate's Wife, that's always breeding——Wench, come, come, Wench, what art thou doing, Sipping? Taſting? Save thee, doſt thou not know the Bottle?

Enter Peg *with a Bottle and* China *Cup.*

Peg. Madam, I was looking for a Cup.

Lady. A Cup, ſave thee, and what a Cup haſt thou brought! Doſt thou take me for a *Fairy*, to drink out of an *Acorn*? Why didſt thou not bring thy Thimble? Haſt thou ne'er a Braſs-Thimble clinking in thy Pocket with a bit of Nutmeg? I warrant thee. Come, fill, fill.—So—again. See who that is——[*One knocks.*] Set down the Bottle firſt. Here, here, under the Table—What would'ſt thou go with the Bottle in thy Hand like a Tapſter. As I'm a Perſon, this Wench has liv'd in an Inn upon the Road, before ſhe came to me, like *Maritorne*'s the *Aſturian* in *Don Quixote*. No *Foible* yet?

Peg. No Madam, Mrs. *Marwood.*

Lady. O *Marwood*, let her come in. Come in good *Marwood.*

Enter Mrs. Marwood.

Mrs. *Mar.* I'm ſurpriz'd to find your Ladiſhip in *diſhabille* at this time of day.

Lady. Foible's a loſt Thing; has been abroad ſince Morning, and never heard of ſince.

Mrs. *Mar.* I ſaw her but now, as I came mask'd through the Park, in Conference with *Mirabell.*

Lady. With *Mirabell!* You call my Blood into my Face, with mentioning that Traitor. She durſt not have the Confidence. I ſent her to negotiate an Affair, in which if I'm detected I'm undone. If that wheadling Villain has wrought upon *Foible* to detect me, I'm ruin'd. Oh my dear Friend, I'm a Wretch of Wretches if I'm detected.

Mrs. *Mar.*

Mrs. *Mar.* O Madam, you cannot ſuſpect Mrs. *Foible*'s Integrity.

Lady. O, he carries Poiſon in his Tongue that would corrupt Integrity it ſelf. If ſhe has given him an Opportunity, ſhe has as good as put her Integrity into his Hands. Ah dear *Marwood*, what's Integrity to an Opportunity?——Hark! I hear her——Go you Thing and ſend her in.—[*Exit* Peg.]—Dear Friend retire into my Cloſet, that I may examine her with more Freedom—You'll pardon me dear Friend, I can make bold with you—There are Books over the Chimney—*Quarles* and *Pryn*, and the *Short View of the Stage*, with *Bunyan*'s Works to entertain you.

[*Exit* Marwood.

Enter Foible.

O *Foible*, where haſt thou been? what haſt thou been doing?

Foib. Madam, I have ſeen the Party.

Lady. But what haſt thou done?

Foib. Nay, 'tis your Ladiſhip has done, and are to do; I have only promis'd. But a Man ſo enamour'd—ſo tranſported! Well, if worſhipping of Pictures be a Sin——Poor Sir *Rowland*, I ſay.

Lady. The Miniature has been counted like.——But haſt thou not betray'd me, *Foible?* Haſt thou not detected me to that faithleſs *Mirabell?*——What hadſt thou to do with him in the Park? Anſwer me, has he got nothing out of thee?

Foib. So, the Devil has been before-hand with me, what ſhall I ſay?——Alas, Madam, cou'd I help it, if I met that confident Thing? Was I in Fault? If you had heard how he us'd me, and all upon your Ladiſhip's Account, I'm ſure you wou'd not ſuſpect my Fidelity. Nay, if that had been the worſt I could have born: But he had a Fling at your Ladiſhip too; and then I could not hold: But i'faith I gave him his own.

Lady. Me? What did the filthy Fellow ſay?

Foib. O Madam; 'tis a Shame to ſay what he ſaid——With his Taunts and his Fleers, toſſing up his Noſe. Humh (ſays he) what you are a hatching ſome Plot (ſays he) you are ſo early abroad, or Catering (ſays he) ferreting for ſome disbanded Officer I warrant——Half Pay is but thin Subſiſtance (ſays he)——Well, what Penſion does your Lady propoſe? Let me ſee (ſays he) what ſhe muſt come down pretty deep now, ſhe's ſuperannuated (ſays he) and——

Lady. Ods my Life, I'll have him, I'll have him murder'd. I'll have him poiſon'd. Where does he eat? I'll marry a Drawer to have him poiſon'd in his Wine. I'll ſend for *Robin* from *Lockets*——Immediately.

Foib. Poiſon him? Poiſoning's too good for him. Starve him, Madam, ſtarve him; marry Sir *Rowland*, and get him diſinherited. O you would bleſs your ſelf, to hear what he ſaid.

Lady. A Villain, ſuperannuated!

Foib. Humh (ſays he) I hear you are laying Deſigns againſt me too (ſays he) and Mrs. *Millamant* is to marry my Uncle; (he does not ſuſpect a Word of your Ladiſhip;) but (ſays he) I'll fit you for that, I warrant you (ſays he) I'll hamper you for that (ſays he) you and your old Frippery too (ſays he) I'll handle you——

Lady. Audacious Villain! handle me, wou'd he durſt — Frippery? old Frippery! Was there ever ſuch a foul-mouth'd Fellow? I'll be marry'd to Morrow, I'll be contracted to Night.

Foib. The ſooner the better, Madam.

Lady. Will Sir *Rowland* be here, ſay'ſt thou? when, *Foible?*

Foib. Incontinently, Madam. No new Sheriff's Wife expects the Return of her Husband after Knighthood, with that Impatience in which Sir *Rowland* burns for the dear Hour of kiſſing your Ladiſhip's Hand after Dinner.

Lady. Frippery! Superannuated Frippery! I'll Frippery the Villain; I'll reduce him to Frippery and Rags: A Tatterdemallion——I hope to ſee him hung with Tatters, like a Long-Lane Pent-houſe, or a Gibbet-Thief. A ſlander-mouth'd Railer: I warrant the Spendthrift Prodigal's in Debt as much as the Million Lottery, or the whole Court upon a Birth-Day. I'll ſpoil his Credit with his Tailor. Yes, he ſhall have my Niece with her Fortune, he ſhall.

Foib. He! I hope to ſee him lodge in *Ludgate* firſt, and angle into *Black Friars* for Braſs Farthings, with an old Mitten.

Lady. Ay dear *Foible*; thank thee for that, dear *Foible*. He has put me out of all Patience. I ſhall never recompoſe my Features, to receive Sir *Rowland* with any Oeconomy of Face. This Wretch has fretted me that I am abſolutely decay'd. Look *Foible*.

Foib. Your Ladiſhip has frown'd a little too raſhly, indeed Madam. There are ſome Cracks diſcernable in the white Verniſh.

Lady. Let me ſee the Glaſs——Cracks, ſay'ſt thou? Why I am arrantly flea'd——I look like an old peel'd Wall. Thou muſt repair me, *Foible*, before Sir *Rowland* comes; or I ſhall never keep up to my Picture.

Foib. I warrant you, Madam; a little Art once made your Picture like you; and now a little of the ſame Art muſt make you like your Picture. Your Picture muſt ſit for you, Madam.

Lady.

Lady. But art thou ſure Sir *Rowland* will not fail to come? Or will a not fail when he does come? Will he be Importunate, *Foible*, and puſh? For if he ſhould not be Importunate —— I ſhall never break Decorums —— I ſhall die with Confuſion, if I am forc'd to advance —— Oh no, I can never advance —— I ſhall ſwoon if he ſhould expect Advances. No, I hope Sir *Rowland* is better bred, than to put a Lady to the neceſſity of breaking her Forms. I won't be too coy neither. —— I won't give him Deſpair —— But a little Diſdain is not amiſs; a little Scorn is alluring.

Foib. A little Scorn becomes your Ladiſhip.

Lady. Yes, but Tenderneſs becomes me beſt —— A ſort of a Dyingneſs — You ſee that Picture has a ſort of a —— Ha *Foible?* A Swimmingneſs in the Eyes —— Yes, I'll look ſo —— My Niece affects it; but ſhe wants Features. Is Sir *Rowland* handſome? Let my Toilet be remov'd —— I'll dreſs above. I'll receive Sir *Rowland* here. Is he handſome? Don't anſwer me. I won't know: I'll be ſurpriz'd. I'll be taken by Surprize.

Foib. By Storm, Madam. Sir *Rowland's* a briſk Man.

Lady. Is he! O then he'll Importune, if he's a briſk Man. I ſhall ſave Decorums if Sir *Rowland* importunes. I have a mortal Terror at the Apprehenſion of offending againſt Decorums. O I'm glad he's a briſk Man. Let my Things be remov'd, good *Foible.* [*Exit.*

Enter Mrs. Fainall.

Mrs. *Fain.* O *Foible*, I have been in a Fright, leſt I ſhould come too late. That Devil, *Marwood*, ſaw you in the Park with *Mirabell*, and I'm afraid will diſcover it to my Lady.

Foib. Diſcover what, Madam?

Mrs. *Fain.* Nay, nay, put not on that ſtrange Face. I am privy to the whole Deſign, and know that *Waitwell*, to whom thou wert this Morning marry'd, is to perſonate *Mirabell's* Uncle, and as ſuch winning my Lady, to involve her in thoſe Difficulties from which *Mirabell* only muſt releaſe her, by his making his Conditions to have my Couſin and her Fortune left to her own Diſpoſal.

Foib. O dear Madam, I beg your Pardon. It was not my Confidence in your Ladiſhip that was deficient; but I thought the former good Correſpondence between your Ladiſhip and Mr. *Mirabell*, might have hinder'd his communicating this Secret.

Mrs. *Fain.* Dear *Foible*, forget that.

Foib. O dear Madam, Mr. *Mirabell* is ſuch a ſweet winning Gentleman — But your Ladiſhip is the Pattern of Generoſity. —

Sweet

Sweet Lady, to be ſo good! Mr. *Mirabell* cannot chuſe but be grateful. I find your Ladiſhip has his Heart ſtill. Now, Madam, I can ſafely tell your Ladiſhip our Succeſs, Mrs. *Marwood* had told my Lady; but I warrant I manag'd my ſelf. I turn'd it all for the better. I told my Lady that Mr. *Mirabell* rail'd at her. I laid horrid Things to his Charge, I'll vow; and my Lady is ſo incens'd, that ſhe'll be contracted to Sir *Rowland* to Night, ſhe ſays;—I warrant I work'd her up, that he may have her for asking for, as they ſay of a *Welſh* Maiden-head.

Mrs. *Fain.* O rare *Foible!*

Foib. Madam, I beg your Ladiſhip to acquaint Mr. *Mirabell* of his Succeſs. I would be ſeen as little as poſſible to ſpeak to him,——beſides, I believe Madam *Marwood* watches me.——She has a Month's Mind; but I know Mr. *Mirabell* can't abide her.——[*Enter Footman.*] *John*——remove my Lady's Toilet. Madam, your Servant. My Lady is ſo impatient, I fear ſhe'll come for me, if I ſtay.

Mrs. *Fain.* I'll go with you up the back Stairs, leſt I ſhould meet her. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mrs. Marwood.

Mrs. *Mar.* Indeed, Mrs. Engine, is it thus with you? Are you become a go-between of this Importance? Yes, I ſhall watch you. Why this Wench is the *Paſs-par-tout*, a very Maſter-Key to every Body's ſtrong Box. My Friend *Fainall*, have you carry'd it ſo ſwimmingly? I thought there was ſomething in it; but it ſeems it's over with you. Your Loathing is not from a want of Appetite then, but from a Surfeit. Elſe you could never be ſo cool to fall from a Principal to be an Aſſiſtant; to procure for him! A Pattern of Generoſity, that I confeſs. Well, Mr. *Fainall*, you have met with your match.——O Man, Man! Woman, Woman! The Devil's an Aſs: If I were a Painter, I would draw him like an Idiot, a Driveler, with a Bib and Bells. Man ſhould have his Head and Horns, and Woman the reſt of him. Poor ſimple Fiend! Madam *Marwood* has a Month's Mind, but he can't abide her——'Twere better for him you had not been his Confeſſor in that Affair; without you could have kept his Counſel cloſer. I ſhall not prove another Pattern of Generoſity, and ſtalk for him, 'till he takes his Stand to aim at a Fortune, he has not oblig'd me to that, with thoſe Exceſſes of himſelf; and now I'll have none of him. Here comes the good Lady, panting ripe; with a Heart full of Hope, and a Head full of Care, like any Chymiſt upon the Day of Projection.

Enter

Enter Lady Wiſhfort.

Lady. O dear *Marwood* what ſhall I ſay, for this rude Forgetfulneſs——— But my dear Friend is all Goodneſs.

Mrs. *Mar.* No Apologies, dear Madam. I have been very well entertain'd.

Lady. As I'm a Perſon I am in a very Chaos to think I ſhou'd ſo forget my ſelf—But I have ſuch an Olio of Affairs really I know not what to do——[*Calls*]—*Foible*——I expect my Nephew Sir *Wilfull* ev'ry Moment too:——Why *Foible*—He means to Travel for Improvement.

Mrs. *Mar.* Methinks Sir *Wilfull* ſhould rather think of marrying than Travelling at his Years. I hear he is turn'd of Forty.

Lady. O he's in leſs Danger of being ſpoil'd by his Travels—I am againſt my Nephew's marrying too Young. It will be time enough when he comes back, and has acquir'd Diſcretion to chuſe for himſelf.

Mrs. *Mar.* Methinks Mrs. *Millamant* and he wou'd make a very fit Match. He may Travel afterwards. 'Tis a Thing very uſual with young Gentlemen.

Lady. I promiſe you I have thought on't——And ſince 'tis your Judgment, I'll think on't again. I aſſure you I will; I value your Judgment extreamly. On my Word I'll propoſe it.

Enter Foible.

Come, come *Foible*——I had forgot my Nephew will be here before Dinner——— I muſt make haſte.

Foib. Mr. *Witwoud* and Mr. *Petulant*, are come to Dine with your Ladiſhip.

Lady. O Dear, I can't appear 'till I am dreſs'd. Dear *Marwood* ſhall I be free with you again, and beg you to entertain 'em. I'll make all imaginable haſte. Dear Friend excuſe me.

[*Exit Lady and* Foible.

Enter Mrs. Millamant *and* Mincing.

Milla. Sure never any thing was ſo Unbred as that odious Man.——*Marwood*, your Servant.

Mrs. *Mar.* You have a Colour, what's the matter?

Milla. That horrid Fellow *Petulant*, has provok'd me into a Flame——I have broke my Fan——*Mincing*, lend me yours;—Is not all the Powder out of my Hair?

Mrs. *Mar.* No. What has he done?

Milla. Nay, he has done nothing; he has only talk'd—Nay, he has ſaid nothing neither; but he has contradicted ev'ry Thing that has been ſaid. For my part, I thought *Witwoud* and he wou'd have quarrell'd.

Minc.

Minc. I vow Mem, I thought once they wou'd have fit.

Milla. Well, 'tis a lamentable thing I ſwear, that one has not the Liberty of chuſing one's Acquaintance as one does ones Cloaths.

Mrs. *Mar.* If we had the Liberty, we ſhou'd be as weary of one Set of Acquaintance, tho' never ſo good, as we are of one Suit, tho' never ſo fine. A Fool and a *Doily* Stuff wou'd now and then find Days of Grace, and be worn for Variety

Milla. I could conſent to wear 'em, if they wou'd wear alike; but Fools never wear out ——— They are ſuch *Drap-du-berry* Things! Without one cou'd give 'em to ones Chamber-maid after a Day or two.

Mrs. *Mar.* 'Twere better ſo indeed. Or what think you of the Play-houſe? A fine gay gloſly Fool ſhou'd be given there, like a new masking Habit, after the Maſquerade is over, and we have done with the Diſguiſe. For a Fool's Viſit is always a Diſguiſe; and never admitted by a Woman of Wit, but to blind her Affair with a Lover of Senſe. If you wou'd but appear bare-fac'd now, and own *Mirabell*; you might as eaſily put off *Petulant* and *Witwoud*, as your Hood and Scarf. And indeed 'tis time, for the Town has found it: The Secret is grown too big for the Pretence: 'Tis like Mrs. *Primly*'s great Belly; ſhe may lace it down before, but it burniſhes on her Hips. Indeed, *Millamant*, you can no more conceal it, than my Lady *Strammel* can her Face, that goodly Face, which in Defiance of her Rheniſh-wine Tea, will not be comprehended in a Mask.

Milla. I'll take my Death, *Marwood*, you are more Cenſorious than a decay'd Beauty, or a diſcarded Toaſt; *Mincing*, tell the Men they may come up. My Aunt is not dreſſing; their Folly is leſs provoking than your Malice. The Town has found it. [*Exit* Mincing.] What has it found? That *Mirabell* loves me is no more a Secret, than it is a Secret that you diſcover'd it to my Aunt, or than the Reaſon why] you diſcover'd it is a Secret.

Mrs. *Mar.* You are nettl'd.

Mill. You're miſtaken. Ridiculous!

Mrs. *Mar.* Indeed, my Dear, you'll tear another Fan, if you don't mitigate thoſe violent Airs.

Mill. O ſilly! Ha, ha, ha. I cou'd laugh immoderately. Poor *Mirabell*! His Conſtancy to me has quite deſtroy'd his Complaiſance for all the World beſide. I ſwear, I never enjoin'd it him, to be ſo coy ——If I had the Vanity to think he wou'd obey

me

me; I wou'd command him to ſhew more Gallantry——'Tis hardly well bred to be ſo particular on one Hand, and ſo inſenſible one the other. But I deſpair to prevail, and ſo let him follow his own Way. Ha, ha, ha. Pardon me, dear Creature, I muſt laugh, ha, ha, ha; tho' I grant you 'tis a little barbarous, ha, ha, ha.

Mrs. *Mar.* What pity 'tis, ſo much fine Railery, and deliver'd with ſo ſignificant Geſture, ſhou'd be ſo unhappily directed to miſcarry.

Milla. Hæ? Dear Creature I ask your Pardon——I ſwear I did not mind you.

Mrs. *Mar.* Mr. *Mirabell* and you both may think it a Thing impoſſible, when I ſhall tell him by telling you——

Milla. O dear, what? for it is the ſame thing, if I hear it——Ha, ha, ha.

Mrs. *Mar.* That I deteſt him, hate him, Madam.

Milla. O Madam, why ſo do I——And yet the Creature loves me, ha, ha, ha. How can one forbear laughing to think of it—I am a Sybil if I am not amaz'd to think what he can ſee in me. I'll take my Death, I think you are handſomer——and within a Year or two as young.——If you cou'd but ſtay for me, I ſhou'd overtake you——But that cannot be——Well, that Thought makes me melancholy——Now I'll be ſad.

Mrs. *Mar.* Your merry Note may be chang'd ſooner than you think.

Milla. D'ye ſay ſo? Then I'm reſolv'd I'll have a Song to keep up my Spirits.

Enter Mincing.

Minc. The Gentlemen ſtay but to Comb, Madam; and will wait on you.

Milla. Deſire Mrs.——that is in the next Room to ſing the Song I wou'd have learnt Yeſterday. You ſhall hear it, Madam——Not that there's any great matter in it——But 'tis agreeable to my Humour.

SONG.

Set by Mr. John Eccles, *and Sung by Mrs.* Hodgſon.

I.

LOVE's but the Frailty of the Mind,
When 'tis not with Ambition join'd;
A ſickly Flame, which if not fed expires;
And feeding, waſtes in Self-conſuming Fires.

II.

'Tis not to wound a wanton Boy
Or am'rous Youth, that gives the Joy;
But 'tis the Glory to have pierc'd a Swain,
For whom inferior Beauties ſigh'd in vain.

III.

Then I alone the Conqueſt prize,
When I inſult a Rival's Eyes:
If there's Delight in Love, 'tis when I ſee
That Heart which others bleed for, bleed for me.

Enter Petulant *and* Witwoud.

Milla. Is your Animoſity compos'd, Gentlemen?

Wit. Raillery, Raillery, Madam, we have no Animoſity——We hit off a little Wit now and then, but no Animoſity——The falling out of Wits is like the falling out of Lovers——We agree in the main, like Treble and Baſe. Ha, *Petulant!*

Pet. Ay in the main——But when I have a Humour to contradict.

Wit. Ay, when he has a Humour to contradict, then I contradict too. What, I know my Cue. Then we contradict one another like two Battle-dores: For Contradictions beget one another like *Jews*.

Pet. If he ſays Black's Black——If I have a Humour to ſay 'tis Blue——Let that paſs——All's one for that. If I have a Humour to prove it, it muſt be granted.

Wit. Not poſitively muſt——But it may——It may.

Pet. Yes, it poſitively muſt, upon Proof poſitive.

Wit. Ay, upon Proof poſitive it muſt; but upon Proof preſumptive it only may. That's a Logical Diſtinction now, Madam.

Mrs. *Mar.* I perceive your Debates are of Importance, and very learnedly handl'd.

Pet. Importance is one Thing, and Learning's another; but a Debate's a Debate, that I aſſert.

Wit. Petulant's an Enemy to Learning; he relies altogether on his Parts.

Pet. No, I'm no Enemy to Learning; it hurts not me.

Mrs. *Mar.* That's a Sign indeed its no Enemy to you.

Pet. No, no, it's no Enemy to any Body, but them that have it.

Milla. Well, an illiterate Man's my Averſion. I wonder at the Impudence of any illiterate Man, to offer to make Love.

Wit.

Wit. That I confeſs I wonder at too.

Milla. Ah! to marry an Ignorant! that can hardly Read or Write.

Pet. Why ſhould a Man be ever the further from being Marry'd tho' he can't read, any more than he is from being Hang'd. The Ordinary's paid for ſetting the *Pſalm*, and the Pariſh-Prieſt for reading the Ceremony. And for the reſt which is to follow in both Caſes, a Man may do it without Book——So all's one for that.

Milla. D'ye hear the Creature? Lord, here's Company, I'll be gone. [*Exeunt* Millamant *and* Mincing.

Wit. In the Name of *Bartlemew* and his Fair, what have we here?

Mrs. *Mar.* 'Tis your Brother, I fancy. Don't you know him?

Wit. Not I——Yes, I think it is he——I've almoſt forgot him; I have not ſeen him ſince the Revolution.

Enter Sir Willfull Witwoud *in a Country Riding Habit, and Servant to Lady* Wiſhfort.

Serv. Sir, my Lady's dreſſing. Here's Company; if you pleaſe to walk in, in the mean time.

Sir *Will.* Dreſſing! What it's but Morning here I warrant with you in *London*; we ſhould count it towards Afternoon in our Parts, down in *Shropſhire*——Why then belike my Aunt han't din'd yet——Ha, Friend?

Serv. Your Aunt, Sir?

Sir *Will.* My Aunt, Sir, yes my Aunt, Sir, and your Lady, Sir; your Lady is my Aunt, Sir——Why, what do'ſt thou not know me, Friend? Why then ſend ſome Body here that does. How long haſt thou liv'd with thy Lady, Fellow, ha!

Serv. A Week, Sir; longer than any Body in the Houſe, except my Lady's Woman.

Sir *Will.* Why then belike thou doſt not know thy Lady, if thou ſee'ſt her, ha Friend?

Serv. Why truly Sir, I cannot ſafely ſwear to her Face in a Morning, before ſhe is dreſs'd. 'Tis like I may give a ſhrewd gueſs at her by this time.

Sir *Will.* Well, prithee try what thou canſt do; if thou canſt not gueſs, enquire her out, do'ſt hear, Fellow? And tell her, her Nephew, Sir *Willfull Witwoud*, is in the Houſe.

Serv. I ſhall, Sir.

Sir *Will.* Hold ye, hear me, Friend; a Word with you in your Ear, prithee who are theſe Gallants?

Serv. Really, Sir, I can't tell; here come ſo many here, 'tis hard to know 'em all. [*Exit Servant.*

Sir *Will.* Oons this Fellow knows leſs than a Starling; I don't think a' knows his own Name.

Mrs. *Mar.* Mr. *Witwoud*, your Brother is not behind Hand in Forgetfulneſs —— I fancy he has forgot you too.

Wit. I hope ſo —— The Devil take him that remembers firſt, I ſay.

Sir *Will.* Save you Gentlemen and Lady.

Mrs. *Mar.* For ſhame, Mr. *Witwoud*; why won't you ſpeak to him? —— And you, Sir.

Wit. Petulant ſpeak.

Pet. And you, Sir.

Sir *Will.* No Offence, I hope. [*Salutes* Marwood.

Mrs. *Mar.* No ſure, Sir.

Wit. This is a vile Dog, I ſee that already. No Offence! Ha, ha, ha, to him; to him *Petulant*, ſmoke him.

Pet. It ſeems as if you had come a Journey, Sir; hem, hem. [*Surveying him round.*

Sir *Will.* Very likely, Sir, that it may ſeem ſo.

Pet. No Offence, I hope, Sir.

Wit. Smoke the Boots, the Boots; *Petulant*, the Boots; Ha, ha, ha.

Sir *Will.* May be not, Sir; thereafter as 'tis meant, Sir.

Pet. Sir, I preſume upon the Information of your Boots.

Sir *Will.* Why, 'tis like you may, Sir: If you are not ſatisfy'd with the Information of my Boots, Sir, if you will ſtep to the Stable, you may enquire further of my Horſe, Sir.

Pet. Your Horſe, Sir! Your Horſe is an Aſs, Sir!

Sir *Will.* Do you ſpeak by way of Offence, Sir?

Mrs. *Mar.* The Gentleman's merry, that's all, Sir —— S'life, we ſhall have a Quarrel betwixt an Horſe and an Aſs, before they find one another out. You muſt not take any thing amiſs from your Friends, Sir. You are among your Friends here, tho' it may be you don't know it —— If I am not miſtaken, you are Sir *Willful Witwoud.*

Sir *Will.* Right, Lady; I am Sir *Willfull Witwoud*, ſo I write my ſelf; no Offence to any Body, I hope; and Nephew to the Lady *Wiſhfort*, of this Manſion.

Mrs. *Mar.* Don't you know this Gentleman, Sir?

Sir *Will.* Hum! What, ſure 'tis not —— Yea by'r Lady, but 'tis —— 'Sheart I know not whether 'tis or no —— Yea but 'tis, by

by the *Rekin*. Brother *Anthony!* What *Tony*, Ifaith! What do'ſt thou not know me? By'r Lady nor I thee, thou art ſo Beeravated, and ſo Beperriwig'd —— 'Sheart why do'ſt not ſpeak? Art thou o'er-joy'd?

Wit. Odſo Brother, is it you? Your Servant, Brother.

Sir *Will.* Your Servaat! Why yours, Sir. Your Servant again—— 'Sheart, and your Friend and Servant to that —— And a —— (*puff*) and a Flap Dragon for your Service, Sir: And a Hare's Foot, and a Hare's Scut for your Service, Sir; an you be ſo cold and ſo courtly!

Wit. No Offence, I hope, Brother.

Sir *Will.* 'Sheart, Sir, but there is, and much Offence —— A Pox, is this your Inns o' Court Breeding, not to know your Friends and your Relations, your Elders, and your Betters?

Wit. Why, Brother *Willfull* of *Salop*, you may be as ſhort as a *Shrewsbury* Cake, if you pleaſe. But I tell you, 'tis not modiſh to know Relations in Town. You think you're in the Country, where great lubberly Brothers ſlabber and kiſs one another when they meet, like a Call of Serjeants —— 'Tis not the Faſhion here; 'tis not indeed, dear Brother.

Sir *Will.* The Faſhion's a Fool; and you're a Fop, dear Brother. 'Sheart, I've ſuſpected this —— By'r Lady I conjectur'd you were a Fop, ſince you began to change the Stile of your Letters, and write in a ſcrap of Paper gilt round the Edges, no broader than a *Subpœna*. I might expect this, when you left off Honour'd Brother; and hoping you are in good Health, and ſo forth —— To begin with a Rat me, Knight, I'm ſo ſick of a laſt Nights Debauch —— O ds Heart, and then tell a familiar Tale of a Cock and a Bull, and a Whore and a Bottle, and ſo conclude —— You could write News before you were out of your Time, when you liv'd with honeſt *Pumple-Noſe* the Attorney of *Furnival's* Inn —— You cou'd intreat to be remember'd then to your Friends round the *Rekin*. We could have Gazetts then, and *Dawks*'s Letter, and the Weekly-Bill, 'till of late Days.

Pet. 'Slife, *Witwoud*, were you ever an Attorney's Clerk? Of the Family of the *Furnivals*. Ha, ha, ha!

Wit. Ay, ay, but that was for a while. Not long, not long; pſhaw, I was not in my own Power then. An Orphan, and this Fellow was my Guardian; ay, ay, I was glad to conſent to that Man to come to *London*. He had the Diſpoſal of me then. If I had not agreed to that, I might have been bound Prentice to a Felt-maker in *Shrewsbury*; this Fellow would have bound me to a Maker of Felts.

Sir

Sir *Will.* 'Sheart, and better than to be bound to a Maker of Fops; where, I ſuppoſe, you have ſerv'd your Time; and now you may ſet up for your ſelf.

Mrs. *Mar.* You intend to Travel, Sir, as I'm inform'd.

Sir *Will.* Belike I may, Madam. I may chance to ſail upon the ſalt Seas, if my Mind hold.

Pet. And the Wind ſerve.

Sir *Will.* Serve or not ſerve, I ſhan't ask Licenſe of you, Sir; nor the Weather-Cock your Companion. I direct my Diſcourſe to the Lady, Sir; 'Tis like my Aunt may have told you, Madam ——— Yes, I have ſettl'd my Concerns, I may ſay now, and am minded to ſee Foreign Parts. If an how that the Peace holds, whereby that is Taxes abate.

Mrs. *Mar.* I thought you had deſign'd for *France* at all Adventures.

Sir *Will.* I can't tell that; 'tis like I may, and 'tis like I may not. I am ſomewhat dainty in making a Reſolution, —becauſe when I make it I keep it. I don't ſtand ſhill I, ſhall I, then; if I ſay't, I'll do't: But I have Thoughts to tarry a ſmall matter in Town, to learn ſomewhat of your *Lingo* firſt, before I croſs the Seas. I'd gladly have a ſpice of your *French* as they ſay, whereby to hold Diſcourſe in Foreign Countries.

Mrs. *Mar.* Here is an Academy in Town for that uſe.

Sir *Will.* There is? 'Tis like there may.

Mrs. *Mar.* No doubt you will return very much improv'd.

Wit. Yes, refin'd like a *Dutch* Skipper from a Whale-fiſhing.

Enter Lady Wiſhfort *and* Fainall.

Lady. Nephew, you are welcome.

Sir *Will.* Aunt, your Servant.

Fain. Sir *Willfull*, your moſt faithful Servant.

Sir *Will.* Couſin *Fainall*, give me your Hand.

Lady. Couſin *Witwoud*, your Servant; Mr *Petulant*, your Servant. ——— Nephew, you are welcome again. Will you drink any Thing after your Journey, Nephew, before you eat? Dinner's almoſt ready.

Sir *Will.* I'm very well I thank you, Aunt —However, I thank you for your courteous Offer. 'Sheart I was afraid you wou'd have been in the Faſhion too, and have remember'd to have forgot your Relations. Here's your Couſin *Tony*, belike, I may'nt call him Brother for fear of Offence.

Lady. O he's a Rallier, Nephew —— My Couſin's a Wit. And your great Wits always rally their beſt Friends to chuſe.

When

When you have been abroad, Nephew, you'll underſtand Raillery better. [Fain *and Mrs.* Marwood *talk apart.*

Sir *Will.* Why then let him hold his Tongue in the mean Time; and rail when that Day comes.

Enter Mincing.

Minc. Mem, I come to acquaint your Laſhip that Dinner is impatient.

Sir *Will.* Impatient? Why then belike it won't ſtay 'till I pull off my Boots. Sweet-heart, can you help me to a pair of Slippers? ——My Man's with his Horſes, I warrant.

Lady. Fie, fie, Nephew, you wou'd not pull off your Boots here—— Go down into the Hall ——— Dinner ſhall ſtay for you ——My Nephew's a little unbred, you'll pardon him, Madam ———Gentlemen will you walk. *Marwood* ———

Mrs. *Mar.* I'll follow you, Madam——Before Sir *Willfull* is ready. [*Manent Mrs.* Marwood *and* Fainall.

Fain. Why then *Foible's* a Bawd, an Errant, Rank, Match-making Bawd. And I it ſeems am a Husband, a Rank-Husband; and my Wife a very Errant, Rank-Wife,—all in the Way of the *World.* 'Sdeath to be an Anticipated Cuckold, a Cuckold in Embrio? Sure I was born with budding Antlers like a young Satyr, or a Citizen's Child. 'Sdeath to be Out-witted, to be Out-jilted ——— Out-Matrimony'd,—If I had kept my Speed like a Stag, 'twere ſomewhat,—but to crawl after, with my Horns like a Snail, and be out-ſtrip'd by my Wife———'tis Scurvy Wedlock.

Mrs *Mar.* Then ſhake it off, you have often wiſh'd for an Opportunity to part;—— and now you have it. But firſt prevent their Plot,——the half of *Millamant's* Fortune is too Conſiderable to be parted with, to a Foe, to *Mirabell.*

Fain. Dam him, that had been mine—had you not made that fond Diſcovery——— That had been forfeited, had they been Married. My Wife had added Luſtre to my Horns, by that Encreaſe of Fortune,——I cou'd have worn 'em tipt with Gold, tho' my Forehead had been furniſh'd like a Deputy-Lieutenant's Hall.

Mrs. *Mar.* They may prove a Cap of Maintenance to you ſtill, if you can away with your Wife. And ſhe's no worſe than when you had her——I dare ſwear ſhe had given up her Game, before ſhe was Marry'd.

Fain. Hum! That may be——She might throw up her Cards; but I'll be hang'd if ſhe did not put Pam in her Pocket.

Mrs. *Mar.* You Married her to keep you; and if you can contrive to have her keep you better than you expected; why ſhould you not keep her longer than you intended? *Fain.*

Fain. The Means, the Means.

Mrs. *Mar.* Diſcover to my Lady your Wife's Conduct; threaten to part with her —— My Lady loves her, and will come to any Compoſition to ſave her Reputation, take the Opportunity of breaking it, juſt upon the Diſcovery of this Impoſture. My Lady will be enrag'd beyond Bounds, and ſacrifice Neice, and Fortune, and all at that Conjuncture. And let me alone to keep her warm, if ſhe ſhou'd flag in her part, I will not fail to prompt her.

Fain. Faith this has an Appearance.

Mrs. *Mar.* I'm ſorry I hinted to my Lady to endeavour a Match between *Millamant* and Sir *Willfull*, that may be an Obſtacle.

Fain. O, for that matter leave me to manage him; I'll diſable him for that, he will drink like a *Dane*: After Dinner, I'll ſet his Hand in.

Mrs. *Mar.* Well, how do you ſtand affected towards your Lady?

Fain. Why faith I'm thinking of it. —— Let me ſee — I am marry'd already; ſo that's over, —— My Wife has plaid the Jade with me — Well, that's over too ——— I never lov'd her, or if I had, why that wou'd have been over too by this time ——— Jealous of her I cannot be, for I am certain; ſo there's an end of Jealouſie. Weary of her, I am, and ſhall be ——— No, there's no end of that; No, no, that were too much to hope. Thus far concerning my Repoſe. Now for my Reputation, ——— As to my own, I marry'd not for it; ſo that's out of the Queſtion. ——— And as to my Part in my Wife's ——— Why ſhe had parted with hers before; ſo bringing none to me, ſhe can take none from me; 'tis againſt all rule of Play, that I ſhould loſe to one, who has not wherewithal to ſtake.

Mrs. *Mar.* Beſides you forget, Marriage is honourable.

Fain. Hum! Faith and that's well thought on; Marriage is honourable as you ſay; and if ſo, wherefore ſhould Cuckoldom be a Diſcredit, being deriv'd from ſo honourable a Root?

Mrs. *Mar.* Nay I know not; if the Root be Honourable, why not the Branches?

Fain. So, ſo, why this Point's clear, ——— Well, how do we proceed?

Mrs. *Mar.* I will contrive a Letter which ſhall be deliver'd to my Lady at the time when that Raſcal who is to act Sir *Rowland* is with her. It ſhall come as from an unknown Hand ——— for the leſs I appear to know of the Truth —— the better I can play the Incendiary. Beſides, I would not have *Foible* provok'd if I cou'd help it, —— becauſe you know ſhe knows ſome Paſſages —

Nay

Nay I expect all will come out—But let the Mine be ſprung firſt, and then I care not if I'm diſcover'd.

Fain. If the worſt come to the worſt,—I'll turn my Wife to Graſs——I have already a Deed of Settlement of the beſt Part of her Eſtate; which I wheadl'd out of her, and that you ſhall partake at leaſt.

Mrs. *Mar.* I hope you are convinc'd that I hate *Mirabell*, now you'll be no more Jealous.

Fain. Jealous, no,—by this Kiſs—let Husbands be Jealous; but let the Lover ſtill believe. Or if he doubt, let it be only to endear his Pleaſure, and prepare the Joy that follows, when he proves his Miſtreſs true; but let Husbands Doubts convert to endleſs Jealouſie; or if they have Belief, let it corrupt to Superſtition, and blind Credulity. I am ſingle; and will herd no more with 'em. True, I wear the Badge, but I'll diſown the Order. And ſince I take my Leave of 'em, I care not if I leave 'em a common Motto to their common Creſt.

All Husbands muſt, or Pain, or Shame, endure;
The Wiſe too jealous are, Fools too ſecure. [Exeunt.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

[*Scene Continues.*]

Enter Lady Wiſhfort *and* Foible.

Lady. IS Sir *Rowland* coming ſay'ſt thou, *Foible?* and are things in Order?

Foib. Yes, Madam. I have put Wax-Lights in the Sconces; and plac'd the Footmen in a Row in the Hall, in their beſt Liveries, with the Coachman and Poſtilion to fill up the Equipage.

Lady. Have you pullvill'd the Coachman and Poſtilion, that they may not ſtink of the Stable, when Sir *Rowland* comes by?

Foib. Yes, Madam.

Lady. And are the Dancers and the Muſick ready, that he may be entertain'd in all Points with Correſpondence to his Paſſion?

Foib. All is ready, Madam.

Lady. And——well——and how do I look, *Foible?*

Foib. Moſt killing well, Madam.

Lady. Well, and how ſhall I receive him? In what figure ſhall

I give his Heart the firſt Impreſſion? There is a great deal in the firſt Impreſſion. Shall I ſit?——No, I won't ſit——I'll walk——ay I'll walk from the Door upon his Entrance; and then turn full upon him——No, that will be too ſudden. I'll lye—ay, I'll lye down—I'll receive him in my little Dreſſing Room, there's a Couch—Yes, yes, I'll give the firſt Impreſſion on a Couch——I won't lye neither, but loll and lean upon one Elbow; with one Foot a little dangling off, jogging in a thoughrful way—Yes—and then as ſoon as he appears, ſtart, ay, ſtart and be ſurpriz'd, and riſe to meet him in a pretty Diſorder—Yes—O, nothing is more alluring than a Levee from a Couch in ſome Confuſion—It ſhews the Foot to advantage, and furniſhes with Bluſhes, and re-compoſing Airs beyond Compariſon. Hark! There's a Coach.

Foib. 'Tis he, Madam.

Lady. O dear, has my Nephew made his Addreſſes to *Millamant?* I order'd him.

Foib. Sir *Willfull* is ſet into Drinking, Madam, in the Parlour.

Lady. Ods my Life, I'll ſend him to her. Call her down, *Foible;* bring her hither. I'll ſend him as I go——When they are together, then come to me *Foible*, that I may not be too long alone with Sir *Rowland.* [*Exit.*

Enter Mrs. Millamant, *and Mrs.* Fainall.

Foib. Madam, I ſtay'd here, to tell your Ladiſhip that Mr. *Mirabell* has waited this half Hour for an Opportunity to talk with you. Tho' my Lady's Orders were to leave you and Sir *Willfull* together. Shall I tell Mr *Mirabell* that you are at leiſure?

Mill. No——What would the dear Man have? I am thoughtful and would amuſe my ſelf,——bid him come another time.

Repeating and walking about. *There never yet was Woman made,*
Nor ſhall, but to be curs'd.

That's hard!

Fain. You are very fond of Sir *John Suckling* to day, *Millalamant*, and the Poets.

Milla. He? Ay, and filthy Verſes——So I am.

Foib. Sir *Willfull* is coming, Madam. Shall I ſend Mr. *Mirabell* away?

Milla. Ay, if you pleaſe, *Foible*, ſend him away,——Or ſend him hither,——juſt as you will, dear *Foible.*——I think I'll ſee him——Shall I? Ay, let the Wretch come.

Repeating.] Thyrſis, *a Youth of the Inſpir'd Train.*

Dear *Fainall*, entertain Sir *Willfull*—Thou haſt Philoſophy to undergo a Fool, thou art marry'd and haſt Patience—I would confer with my own Thoughts.

Fain.

Fain. I am oblig'd to you, that you would make me your Proxy in this Affair; but I have Buſineſs of my own.

Enter Sir Willfull.

O Sir *Willfull*; you are come at the Critical Inſtant. There's your Miſtreſs up to the Ears in Love and Contemplation, purſue your Point, now or never.

Sir *Will.* Yes; my Aunt will have it ſo,——I would gladly have been encourag'd with a Bottle or two, becauſe I'm ſomewhat wary at firſt, before I am acquainted;—But I hope, after a time, I ſhall break my Mind——that is upon further Acquaintance——So for the preſent, Couſin, I'll take my leave—If ſo be you'll be ſo kind to make my Excuſe, I'll return to my Company——— *This while* Milla. *walks about Repeating to her ſelf.*

Fain. O fie, Sir *Willfull!* What, you muſt not be Daunted.

Sir *Will.* Daunted, no, that's not it, it is not ſo much for that——for if ſo be that I ſet on't, I'll do't. But only for the preſent, 'tis ſufficient 'till further Acquaintance, that's all——— your Servant.

Fain. Nay, I'll ſwear you ſhall never loſe ſo favourable an Opportunity, if I can help it. I'll leave you together and lock the Door. [*Exit.*

Sir *Will.* Nay, nay Couſin,——I have forgot my Gloves,—— What d'ye do? 'Sheart a'has lock'd the Door indeed, I think—— Nay, Couſin *Fainall*, open the Door——Pſhaw, what a Vixon Trick is this?——Nay, now a'has ſeen me too——Couſin, I made bold to paſs thro' as it were——I think this Door's Inchanted———

Milla. [*Repeating.*] *I prithee ſpare me, gentle Boy,*
Preſs me no more for that ſlight Toy.

Sir *Will.* Anan? Couſin, your Servant.

Milla. ——*That fooliſh Trifle of a Heart*———Sir *Willfull!*

Sir *Will.* Yes,—your Servant. No Offence I hope, Couſin.

Milla. [*Repeating.*] *I ſwear it will not do its part,*
Tho' thou do'ſt thine, employ'ſt thy Power and Art.

Natural, eaſie *Suckling!*

Sir *Will.* Anan? *Suckling?* No ſuch Suckling neither, Couſin, nor Stripling: I thank Heav'n, I'm no Minor.

Milla. Ah Ruſtick! ruder than *Gothick.*

Sir *Will.* Well, well, I ſhall underſtand your *Lingo* one of theſe Days, Couſin, in the mean while I muſt anſwer in plain *Engliſh.*

Milla. Have you any Buſineſs with me, Sir *Willfull?*

Sir *Will.* Not at preſent, Couſin,——Yes, I made bold to ſee, to come and know if that how you were diſpos'd to fetch a Walk this Evening, if ſo be that I might not be troubleſome, I would have fought a Walk with you.

Milla. A Walk? What then?

Sir *Will.* Nay nothing—Only for the Walks ſake, that's all—

Milla. I nauſeate Walking; 'tis a Country Diverſion, I loath the Country and every thing that relates to it.

Sir *Will.* Indeed! Hah! Look ye, look ye, you do? Nay, 'tis like you may——Here are choice of Paſtimes here in Town, as Plays and the like, that muſt be confeſs'd indeed.——

Milla. Ah l'etourdie! I hate the Town too.

Sir *Will.* Dear Heart, that's much——Hah! that you ſhould hate 'em both! Hah! 'tis like you may; there are ſome can't reliſh the Town, and others can't away with the Country,——'tis like you may be one of thoſe, Couſin.

Milla. Ha, ha, ha. Yes, 'tis like I may.——You have nothing further to ſay to me?

Sir *Will.* Not at preſent, Couſin.——'Tis like when I have an Opportunity to be more private,——I may break my Mind in ſome meaſure,——I conjecture you partly gueſs——However that's as time ſhall try,——But ſpare to ſpeak and ſpare to ſpeed, as they ſay.

Milla. If it is of no great Importance, Sir *Willfull*, you will oblige me to leave me: I have juſt now a little Buſineſs.——

Sir *Will.* Enough, enough, Couſin: Yes, yes, all a caſe——When you're diſpos'd, when you're diſpos'd. Now's as well as another time; and another time as well as now. All's one for that,——Yes, yes, if your Concerns call you, there's no haſte; it will keep cold as they ſay,——Couſin, your Servant.——I think this Door's lock'd.

Milla. You may go this way, Sir.

Sir *Will.* Your Servant, then with your leave I'll return to my Company. [*Exit.*

Milla. Ay, ay; ha, ha, ha.

Like Phœbus *ſung the no leſs am'rous Boy.*

Enter Mirabell.

Mira.——*Like* Daphne *ſhe, as Lovely and as Coy.*

Do you lock your ſelf up from me to make my Search more Curious? Or is this pretty Artifice contriv'd, to ſignifie that here the Chace muſt end, and my Purſuit be Crown'd, for you can fly no further.——

Milla. Vanity! No——— I'll fly and be follow'd to the laſt Moment, tho' I am upon the very Verge of Matrimony, I expect you ſhou'd ſollicit me as much as if I were wavering at the Grate of a Monaſtery, with one Foot over the Threſhold. I'll be ſollicited to the very laſt, nay and afterwards.

Mira. What, after the laſt?

Milla. O, I ſhould think I was poor and had nothing to beſtow, If I were reduc'd to an inglorious Eaſe; and free'd from the agreeable Fatigues of Sollicitation.

Mira. But do not you know, that when Favours are conferr'd upon inſtant and tedious Sollicitation, that they diminiſh in their Value, and that both the Giver loſes the Grace, and the Receiver leſſens his Pleaſure?

Milla. It may be in Things of common Application; but never ſure in Love. O, I hate a Lover, that can dare to think, he draws a Moments Air, Independent on the Bounty of his Miſtreſs. There is not ſo impudent a Thing in Nature, as the ſawcy Look of an aſſured Man, Confident of Succeſs. The Pedantick Arrogance of a very Husband, has not ſo Pragmatical an Air. Ah! I'll never marry, unleſs I am firſt made ſure of my Will and Pleaſure.

Mira. Wou'd you have 'em both before Marriage? Or will you be contented with the firſt now, and ſtay for the other 'till after Grace?

Milla. Ah don't be Impertinent——My dear Liberty, ſhall I leave thee? My faithful Solitude, my darling Contemplation, muſt I bid you then Adieu? Ay-h adieu.——My morning Thoughts, agreeable Wakings, indolent Slumbers, all ye *douceurs*, ye *Someils du Matin adieu*———I can't do't, 'tis more than impoſſible——Poſitively *Mirabell*, I'll lye a Bed in a Morning as long as I pleaſe.

Mira. Then I'll get up in a Morning as early as I pleaſe.

Milla. Ah! Idle Creature, get up when you will——And d'ye hear, I won't be call'd Names after I'm Marry'd; poſitively I won't be call'd Names.

Mira. Names!

Milla. Ay as Wife, Spouſe, my Dear, Joy, Jewel, Love, Sweet-heart, and the reſt of that Nauſeous Cant, in which Men and their Wives are ſo fulſomely familiar,———I ſhall never bear that,———Good *Mirabell* don't let us be familiar or fond, nor kiſs before Folks, like my Lady *Fadler* and Sir *Francis*: Nor go to *Hide-Park* together the firſt *Sunday* in a new Chariot, to provoke Eyes and Whiſpers; And then never to be ſeen there to-

together again; as if we were proud of one another the firſt Week, and aſham'd of one another ever after. Let us never Viſit together, nor go to a Play together, but let us be very ſtrange and well bred: Let us be as ſtrange as if we had been marry'd a great while; and as well bred as if we were not marry'd at all.

Mira. Have you any more Conditions to offer? Hitherto your Demands are pretty reaſonable.

Milla. Trifles, ——— As Liberty to pay and receive Viſits to and from whom I pleaſe; to write and receive Letters, without Interrogatories or wry Faces on your Part; to wear what I pleaſe; and chuſe Converſation with regard only to my own Taſte; to have no Obligation upon me to converſe with Wits that I don't like, becauſe they are your Acqaintance; or to be intimate with Fools, becauſe they may be your Relations. Come to Dinner when I pleaſe, dine in my dreſſing Room when I'm out of Humour without giving a Reaſon. To have my Cloſet Inviolate; to be ſole Empreſs of my Tea-Table, which you muſt never preſume to approach without firſt asking leave. And laſtly, where-ever I am, you ſhall always knock at the Door before you come in. Theſe Articles ſubſcrib'd, if I continue to endure you a little longer, I may by degrees dwindle into a Wife.

Mira. Your Bill of Fare is ſomething advanc'd in this latter Account. Well, have I Liberty to offer Conditions ——— That when you are dwindl'd into a Wife, I may not be beyond Meaſure enlarg'd into a Huſband?

Milla. You have free leave; propoſe your utmoſt, ſpeak and ſpare not.

Mira. I thank you. *Inprimis* then, I Covenant that your Acquaintance be general; that you admit no ſworn Confident, or Intimate of your own Sex; no ſhe Friend to skreen her Affairs under your Countenance, and tempt you to make Trial of a Mutual Secreſie. No Decoy-Duck to wheadle you a *fop* —— *ſcrambling* to the Play in a Maſk —— Then bring you home in a pretended Fright, when you think you ſhall be found out. —— And rail at me for miſſing the Play, and diſappointing the Frolick which you had to pick me up and prove my Conſtancy.

Milla. Deſtable *Inprimis!* I go to the Play in a Maſk!

Mira. Item, I Article, that you continue to like your own Face, as long as I ſhall. And while it paſſes Currant with me, that you endeavour not to new Coin it. To which end, together with all Vizards for the Day, I prohibit all Maſks for the Night, made of oild-skinsand I know not what —— Hog's-bones, Hare's-

gall

gall, Pig-water, and the Marrow of a roſted Cat. In ſhort, I forbid all Commerce with the Gentlewomen in *what-d'ye-call-it*-Court. *Item*, I ſhut my Doors againſt all Bawds with Baskets, and penny-worths of *Muſlin*, *China*, *Fans*, *Atlaſſes*, &c.——*Item* when you ſhall be Breeding.——

Milla. Ah! Name it not.

Mira. Which may be preſum'd, with a Bleſſing on our Endeavours——

Milla. Odious Endeavovrs!

Mira. I denounce againſt all ſtrait-Lacing, Squeezing for a Shape, 'till you mould my Boy's Head like a Sugar-loaf; and inſtead of a Man-Child, make me the Father to a crooked-billet Laſtly, to the Dominion of the *Tea-Table* I ſubmit.——But with *proviſo*, that you exceed not in your Province; but reſtrain your ſelf to native and ſimple *Tea-Table* Drinks, as *Tea*, *Chocolate* and *Coffee*. As likewiſe to Genuine and Authoriz'd *Tea-Table* Talk,—Such as mending of Faſhions, ſpoiling Reputations, railing at abſent Friends, and ſo forth——But that on no Account you encroach upon the Mens Prerogative, and preſume to drink Healths, or toaſt Fellows; for prevention of which, I baniſh all *Foreign Forces*, all Auxiliaries to the *Tea-Table*, as *Orange-Brandy*, all *Anniſeed*, *Cinamon*, *Citron* and *Barbado's-Waters*, together with *Ratafia* and the moſt noble Spirit of *Clary*,——But for *Couſlip-Wine*, *Poppy-Water* and all *Dormitives*, thoſe I allow,——Theſe *proviſo's* admitted, in other things I may prove a tractable and complying Husband.

Milla. O horrid *proviſo's*! filthy ſtrong Waters! I toaſt Fellows, Odious Men! I hate your odious *proviſo's*.

Mira. Then we're agreed. Shall I kiſs your Hand upon the Contract? and here comes one to be a Witneſs to the Sealing of the Deed.

Enter Mrs. Fainall.

Milla. Fainall, what ſhall I do? ſhall I have him? I think I muſt have him.

Mrs. *Fain.* Ay, ay, take him, take him, what ſhou'd you do?

Milla. Well then——I'll take my Death I'm in a horrid Fright—*Fainall*, I ſhall never ſay it——Well—I think——I'll endure you.

Mrs. *Fain.* Fy, fy, have him, have him, and tell him ſo in plain Terms: For I am ſure you have a mind to him.

Milla. Are you? I think I have——and the horrid Man looks as if he thought ſo too——Well, you ridiculous thing you

you, I'll have you, —I won't be kiſs'd, nor I won't be thank'd— Here kiſs my Hand tho' —— So hold your Tongue now, and don't ſay a Word.

Mrs. *Fain.* *Mirabell*, there's a Neceſſity for your Obedience; ——— You have neither time to talk nor ſtay. My Mother is coming; and in my Conſcience if ſhe ſhou'd ſee you, wou'd fall into Fits, and may be not recover time enough to Return to Sir *Rowland*, who as *Foible* tells me is in a fair Way to ſucceed. Therefore ſpare your Extacies for another Occaſion, and ſlip down the back-Stairs, where *Foible* waits to conſult you.

Milla. Ay, go, go. In the mean time I ſuppoſe you have ſaid ſomething to pleaſe me.

Mira. I am all Obedience. [*Exit* Mira.

Mrs. *Fain.* Yonder Sir *Willfull's* drunk; and ſo noiſie that my Mother has been fore'd to leave Sir *Rowland* to appeaſe him; but he anſwers her only with Singing and Drinking ———what they have done by this time I know not. But *Petulant* and he were upon quarrelling as I came by.

Milla. Well, if *Mirabell* ſhou'd not make a good Husband, I am a loſt thing; —— for I find I love him violently.

Mrs. *Fain.* So it ſeems, when you mind not what's ſaid to you. ——If you doubt him, you had beſt take up with Sir *Willfull.*

Milla. How can you name that ſuperannuated Lubber? foh!

Enter Witwoud *from drinking.*

Mrs. *Fain.* So, is the Fray made up, that you have left 'em?

Wit. Left 'em? I could ſtay no longer—I have laugh'd like ten Chriſtnings—I am tipſie with laughing—If I had ſtaid any longer I ſhould have burſt,—I muſt have been let out and piec'd in the Sides like an unſiz'd Camlet ——Yes, yes, the Fray is compos'd; my Lady came in like a *Noli proſequi* and ſtopt their Proceedings.

Milla. What was the Diſpute?

Wit. That's the Jeſt, there was no Diſpute, they cou'd neither of 'em ſpeak for Rage; and ſo fell a ſputt'ring at one another like two roaſting Apples.

Enter Petulant *Drunk.*

Now *Petulant*, all's over, all's well; Gad my Head begins to whim it about ——Why doſt thou not ſpeak? thou art both as drunk and as mute as a Fiſh.

Pet. Look you, Mrs. *Millamant* ——If you can love me, dear Nymph—ſay it—and that's the Concluſion——paſs on, or paſs off,—that's all.

Wit. Thou haſt utter'd *Volumes*, *Folio's*, in leſs than *Decimo Sexto*,

Sexto, my dear *Lacedemonian*, Sirrah *Petulant*, thou art an Epitomizer of Words.

Pet. Witwoud——You are an Annihilator of Senſe.

Wit. Thou art a Retailer of Phraſes, and doſt deal in Remnants of Remnants, like a Maker of Pincuſhions——thou art in truth (metaphorically ſpeaking) a Speaker of ſhort-hand.

Pet. Thou art (without a Figure) juſt one half of an Aſs, and *Baldwin* yonder, thy half Brother is the reſt——A *Gemini* of Aſſes ſplit, would make juſt four of you.

Wit. Thou doſt bite, my dear Muſtard-ſeed, kiſs me for that.

Pet. Stand off—I'll kiſs no more Males,——I have kiſs'd your *twin* yonder in a humour of Reconciliation, 'till he (*hiccup*) riſes upon my Stomach like a Radiſh.

Milla. Eh! filthy Creature—what was the Quarrel?

Pet. There was no Quarrel—there might have been a Quarrel.

Wit. If there had been Words enow between 'em to have expreſs'd Provocation, they had gone together by the Ears like a pair of Caſtanets.

Pet. You were the Quarrel.

Milla. Me!

Pet. If I have a Humour to quarrel, I can make leſs Matters conclude Premiſes,——If you are not handſom, what then? If I have a Humour to prove it.——If I ſhall have my Reward, ſay ſo; if not, fight for your Face the next time your ſelf——I'll go ſleep.

Wit. Do, wrap thy ſelf up like a *Wood-louſe* and dream Revenge——And hear me, if thou canſt learn to write by to Morrow Morning, pen me a Challenge——I'll carry it for thee.

Pet. Carry your Miſtreſs's *Monkey* a *Spider*.——go flea Dogs, and read Romances——I'll go to bed to my Maid. [*Exit.*

Mrs. *Fain.* He's horridly drunk——how came you all in this Pickle?

Wit. A Plot, a Plot, to get rid of the Knight,——Your Huſband's Advice; but he ſneak'd off.

Enter Lady, *and Sir* Willfull *drunk.*

Lady. Out upon't out upon't, at Years of Diſcretion, and comport your ſelf at this Rantipole rate.

Sir *Will.* No Offence, Aunt.

Lady. Offence? As I'm a Perſon, I'm aſham'd of you——Fogh! how you ſtink of Wine! D'ye think my Neice will endure ſuch a *Borachio!* you're an abſolute *Borachio.*

Sir *Will. Borachio!*

Lady. At a time when you ſhou'd commence an Amour, and put your beſt Foot foremoſt——

Sir *Will.* 'Sheart, an you grutch me your Liquor, make a Bill ——Give me more Drink, and take my Purſe.

Sings. *Prithee fill me the Glaſs*
'Till it laughs in my Face,
With Ale that is Potent and Mellow;
He that whines for a Laſs
Is an ignorant Aſs,
For a Bumper *has not its Fellow.*

But if you wou'd have me marry my Couſin,—ſay the Word, and I'll do't—*Willfull* will do't, that's the Word—*Willfull* will do't, that's my Creſt—my Motto I have forgot.

Lady. My Nephew's a little overtaken, Couſin—but 'tis with drinking your Healh——O' my Word you are oblig'd to him.

Sir *Will. In Vino Veritas*, Aunt:——If I drunk your Health to day, Couſin,—I am a *Borachio.* But if you have a Mind to be marry'd, ſay the Word, and ſend for the Piper, *Willfull* will do't. If not, duſt it away, and let's have t'other Round——*Tony*, Ods-heart where's *Tony*—*Tony*'s an honeſt Fellow, but he ſpits after a Bumper, and that's a Fault.

Sings. *We'll drink and we'll never ha' done Boys,*
Put the Glaſs then around with the Sun Boys,
Let Apollo's *Example invite us;*
For he's drunk ev'ry Night,
And that makes him ſo bright,
That he's able next Morning to light us.

The Sun's a good Pimple, an honeſt Soaker, he has a Cellar at your *Antipodes.* If I travel, Aunt, I touch at your *Antipodes*—your *Antipodes* are a good raſcally ſort of topſie turvy Fellows—If I had a Bumper I'd ſtand upon my Head and drink a Health to 'em——A Match or no Match, Couſin, with the hard Name, ——Aunt, *Willfull* will do't. If ſhe has her Maidenhead let her look to't,—if ſhe has not, let her keep her own Counſel in the mean time, and cry out at the Nine Months End.

Milla. Your Pardon, Madam, I can ſtay no longer——Sir *Willfull* grows very powerful, Egh! how he ſmells! I ſhall be overcome if I ſtay. Come, Couſin. [*Ex.* Milla. *and Mrs.* Fain.

Lady. Smells! he would poiſon a Tallow-Chandler and his Family. Beaſtly Creature, I know not what to do with him.—

Travel

Travel quoth a; ay travel, travel, get thee gone, get thee but far enough, to the *Saracens*, or the *Tartars*, or the *Turks*—for thou art not fit to live in a Chriſtian Commonwealth, thou beaſtly Pagan.

Sir *Will. Turks*, no; no *Turks*, Aunt: Your *Turks* are Infidels, and believe not in the Grape. Your *Mahometan*, your *Muſſulman* is a dry Stinkard——No Offence, Aunt. My Map ſays that your *Turk* is not ſo honeſt a Man as your Chriſtian——I cannot find by the Map that your *Mufti* is Orthodox——Whereby it is a plain Caſe, that Orthodox is a hard Word, Aunt, and *(hiccup)* Greek for Claret.

Sings. *To drink is a Chriſtian Diverſion,*
Unknown to the Turk *and the* Perſian:
Let Mahometan *Fools*
Live by Heatheniſh Rules,
And be damn'd over Tea-Cups and Coffee.
But let Britiſh *Lads ſing,*
Crown a Health to the King,
And a Fig for your Sultan *and* Sophy.

Ah, *Tony!*

Enter Foible, *and whiſpers* Lady.

Lady. Sir *Rowland* impatient? Good lack! what ſhall I do with this beaſtly Tumbril?——Go lye down and ſleep, you Sot——Or as I'm a Perſon, I'll have you baſtinado'd with Broom-ſticks. Call up the Wenches. [*Exit* Foible.

Sir *Will.* Ahey? Wenches, where are the Wenches?

Lady. Dear Couſin *Witwoud* get him away, and you will bind me to you inviolably. I have an Affair of moment that invades me with ſome Precipitation——You will oblige me to all Futurity.

Wit. Come, Knight——Pox on him, I don't know what to ſay to him——Will you go to a Cock-match?

Sir *Will.* With a Wench, *Tony?* Is ſhe a ſhake-bag, Sirrah? let me bite your Cheek for that.

Wit. Horrible! He has a Breath like a Bagpipe——Ay, ay, come will you march, my *Salopian?*

Sir *Will.* Lead on, little *Tony*——I'll follow thee my *Anthony*, my *Tantony*, Sirrah thou ſha't be my *Tantony*, and I'll by thy *Pig.*

——*And a Fig for your* Sultan *and* Sophy.

[*Exit Singing with* Witwoud.

Lady. This will never do. It will never make a Match.——At leaſt before he has been abroad.

Enter Waitwell, *diſguis'd as for Sir* Rowland.

Dear Sir *Rowland*, I am confounded with Confuſion at the Retroſpection of my own Rudeneſs, —— I have more Pardons to ask than the *Pope* diſtributes in the Year of *Jubilee*. But I hope where there is likely to be ſo near an Alliance, —— we may unbend the Severity of *Decorum* —— and diſpenſe with a little Ceremony.

Wait. My Impatience, Madam, is the Effect of my Tranſport; ——and 'till I have the Poſſeſſion of your adorable Perſon, I am tantaliz'd on the Rack; and do but hang, Madam, on the Tenter of Expectation.

Lady. You have Exceſs of Gallantry, Sir *Rowland*; and preſs things to a Concluſion, with a moſt prevailing Vehemence. —— But a Day or two for Decency of Marriage. ——

Wait. For Decency of Funeral, Madam. The Delay will break my Heart —— or if that ſhould fail, I ſhall be Poiſon'd. My Nephew will get an inkling of my Deſigns, and Poiſon me, —— and I would willingly ſtarve him before I die ------ I would gladly go out of the World with that Satisfaction. ------ That would be ſome Comfort to me, if I could but live ſo long as to be reveng'd on that unnatural Viper.

Lady. Is he ſo Unnatural, ſay you? Truly I would contribute much both to the ſaving of your Life, and the accompliſhment of your Revenge ------ Not that I reſpect my ſelf; tho' he has been a perfidious Wretch to me.

Wait. Perfidious to you!

Lady. O Sir *Rowland*, the Hours that he has dy'd away at my Feet, the Tears that he has ſhed, the Oaths that he has ſworn, the Palpitations that he has felt, the Trances and the Tremblings, the Ardors and the Ecſtacies, the Kneelings and the Riſings, the Heart-heavings and the Hand-gripings, the Pangs and the Pathetick Regards of his proteſting Eyes! Oh no Memory can Regiſter.

Wait. What, my Rival! is the Rebel my Rival? a'dies.

Lady. No, don't kill him at once, Sir *Rowland*, ſtarve him gradually Inch by Inch.

Wait. I'll do't. In three Weeks he ſhall be bare-foot; in a Month out at Knees with begging an Alms, ------ he ſhall ſtarve upward and upward, 'till he has nothing living but his Head, and then go out in a Stink like a Candle's End upon a Save-all.

Lady. Well, Sir *Rowland*, you have the way. —— You are no Novice in the Labyrinth of Love —— You have the Clue ——

But

But as I am a Perſon, Sir *Rowland*, you muſt not attribute my yielding to any ſiniſter Appetite, or Indigeſtion of Widow-hood; nor impute my Complacency to any Lethargy of Continence——I hope you do not think me prone to any Iteration of Nuptials.—

Wait. Far be it from me——

Lady. If you do, I proteſt I muſt recede——or think that I have made a Proſtitution of Decorums, but in the Vehemence of Compaſſion, and to ſave the Life of a Perſon of ſo much Importance——

Wait. I eſteem it ſo——

Lady. Or elſe you wrong my Condeſcenſion——

Wait. I do not, I do not——

Lady. Indeed you do.

Wait. I do not, fair Shrine of Virtue.

Lady. If you think the leaſt Scruple of Carnality was an Ingredient——

Wait. Dear Madam, no. You are all *Camphire* and *Frankincenſe*, all *Chaſtity* and *Odour*.

Lady. Or that——

Enter Foible.

Foib. Madam, the Dancers are ready, and there's one with a Letter, who muſt deliver it into your own Hands.

Lady. Sir *Rowland*, will you give me leave? Think favourably, judge candidly, and conclude you have found a Perſon who would ſuffer Racks in Honour's Cauſe, dear Sir *Rowland*, and will wait on you inceſſantly. [*Exit.*

Wait. Fie, fie!—What a Slavery have I undergone; Spouſe, haſt thou any *Cordial*——I want *Spirits*.

Foib. What a waſhy Rogue art thou, to pant thus for a Quarter of an Hours Lying and Swearing to a fine Lady?

Wait. O, ſhe is the Antidote to Deſire. Spouſe, thou will't fare the worſe for't——I ſhall have no Appetite to Iteration of Nuptials——this Eight and Forty Hours——By this Hand I'd rather be a Chair-man in the Dog-days——than act Sir *Rowland* 'till this time to Morrow.

Enter Lady *with a Letter.*

Lady. Call in the Dancers;——Sir *Rowland*, we'll ſit, if you pleaſe, and ſee the Entertainment. [*Dance.*

Now with your Permiſſion, Sir *Rowland*, I will peruſe my Letter——I would open it in your Preſence, becauſe I would not make you uneaſie. If it ſhould make you uneaſie I would burn it——ſpeak if it does——but you may ſee by the Superſcription it is like a Woman's Hand.

Foib.

Foib. By Heav'n! Mrs. *Marwood's*, I know it,—— my Heart akes—— get it from her—— [*To him.*]

Wait. A Woman's Hand? No, Madam, that's no Woman's Hand, I ſee that already. That's ſome Body whoſe Throat muſt be cut.

Lady. Nay, Sir *Rowland*, ſince you give me a Proof of your Paſſion by your Jealouſie, I promiſe you I'll make you a Return, by a frank Communication—— You ſhall ſee it—we'll open it together—look you here.

Reads.—— *Madam, tho' unknown to you,* [Look you there, 'tis from no Body that I know.]—— *I have that Honour for your Character, that I think my ſelf oblig'd to let you know you are abus'd. He who pretends to be Sir* Rowland *is a Cheat and a Raſcal.*——

Oh Heav'ns! what's this?

Foib. Unfortunate, all's ruin'd.

Wait. How, how, let me ſee, let me ſee—— reading, *A Raſcal and diſguis'd, and ſtubborn'd for that Impoſture,*—— O Villany! O Villany!—— *by the Contrivance of*——

Lady. I ſhall faint, I ſhall die, oh!

Foib. Say 'tis your Nephew's Hand.—— Quickly, his Plot, ſwear, ſwear it.—— [*To him.*]

Wait. Here's a Villain! Madam, don't you perceive it, don't you ſee it?

Lady. Too well, too well. I have ſeen too much.

Wait. I told you at firſt I knew the Hand—— A Woman's Hand? The Raſcal writes a ſort of a large Hand; your *Roman* Hand—— I ſaw there was a Throat to be cut preſently. If he were my Son, as he is my Nephew, I'd Piſtol him——

Foib. O Treachery! But are you ſure, Sir *Rowland*, it is his Writing?

Wait. Sure? am I here? do I live? do I love this Pearl of *India?* I have Twenty Letters in my Pocket from him, in the ſame Character.

Lady. How!

Foib. O what Luck it is, Sir *Rowland*, that you were preſent at this Juncture! This was the Buſineſs that brought Mr. *Mirabell* diſguis'd to Madam *Millamant* this Afternoon. I thought ſomething was contriving, when he ſtole by me and would have hid his Face.

Lady. How, how!—I heard the Villain was in the Houſe indeed, and now I remember, my Niece went away abruptly, when Sir *Willfull* was to have made his Addreſſes. *Foib.*

Foib. Then, then Madam, Mr. *Mirabell* waited for her in her Chamber, but I wou'd not tell your Ladyſhip to diſcompoſe you when you were to receive Sir *Rowland.*

Wait. Enough, his Date is ſhort.

Foib. No, good Sir *Rowland*, don't incur the Law.

Wait. Law! I care not for Law. I can but die, and 'tis in a good Cauſe —— My Lady ſhall be ſatisfy'd of my Truth and Innocence, tho' it coſt me my Life.

Lady. No, dear Sir *Rowland*, don't fight, if you ſhou'd be kill'd I muſt never ſhew my Face; or hang'd, —— O Conſider my Reputation, Sir *Rowland* — No you ſhan't fight, ——— I'll go in and examine my Niece; I'll make her confeſs. I conjure you Sir *Rowland* by all your Love not to fight.

Wait. I am charm'd Madam, I obey. But ſome Proof you muſt let me give you; —— I'll go for a black Box, which contains the Writings of my whole Eſtate, and deliver that into your Hands.

Lady. Ay dear Sir *Rowland*, that will be ſome Comfort; bring the black Box.

Wait. And may I preſume to bring a Contract to be ſign'd this Night? May I hope ſo far?

Lady. Bring what you will; but come alive, pray come alive. O this is a happy Diſcovery.

Wait. Dead or alive I'll come —— and married we will be in ſpight of Treachery; ay and get an Heir that ſhall defeat the laſt remaining Glimpſe of Hope in my abandon'd Nephew. Come, my Buxom Widow.

E'er long you ſhall ſubſtantial Proof receive
That I'm an arrant Knight ——

Foib. *Or arrant Knave.* [*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

[*Scene Continues.*]

Enter Lady Wiſhfort *and* Foible.

Lady. OUT of my Houſe, out of my Houſe, thou *Viper*, thou *Serpent*, that I have foſter'd, thou boſom Traitreſs, that I rais'd from nothing — Begon begon, begon, go, go, —— That I took from waſhing of old Gauſe and weaving of dead Hair,

Hair, with a bleak blue Nose, over a Chafing-dish of starv'd Embers, and Dining behind a Traver's Rag, in a Shop no bigger than a Bird-cage, ——— go, go, starve again, do, do.

Foib. Dear Madam, I'll beg Pardon on my Knees.

Lady. Away, out, out, go set up for your self again —— do, drive a Trade, do, with your Three penny Worth of small Ware, flaunting upon a Packthread, under a Brandy-sellers Bulk, or against a dead Wall by a Ballad-monger. Go, hang out an old *Frisoneer-gorget*, with a Yard of Yellow *Colberteen* again; do; an old gnaw'd Mask, Two Rows of Pins and a Child's Fiddle; A Glass Necklace with the Beads broken, and a Quilted Night-cap with one Ear. Go, go, drive a Trade, —— These were your Commodoties, you treacherous Trull, this was your Merchandize you dealt in, when I took you into my House, plac'd you next my self, and made you Governante of my whole Family. You have forgot this, have you? Now you have feather'd your Nest.

Foib. No, no, dear Madam. Do but hear me, have but a Moment's Patience —— I'll confess all. Mr. *Mirabell* seduc'd me; I am not the first that he has wheadl'd with his dissembling Tongue; Your Ladiship's own Wisdom has been deluded by him, then how shou'd I, a poor Ignorant, defend my self? O Madam, If you knew but what he promis'd me; and how he assur'd me your Ladiship shou'd come to no Damage —— Or else the Wealth of the *Indies* shou'd not have brib'd me to conspire against so Good, so Sweet, so kind a Lady as you have been to me.

Lady. No Damage? What to betray me, to marry me to a Cast-serving-Man; to make me a Receptacle, an Hospital for a decay'd Pimp? No Damage? O thou frontless Impudence, more than a big-belly'd Actress.

Foib. Pray do but hear me Madam, he cou'd not marry your Ladiship, Madam —— No indeed his Marriage was to have been void in Law; for he was marry'd to me first, to secure your Ladiship. He cou'd not have bedded your Ladiship; for if he had consummated with your Ladiship, he must have run the risque of the Law, and been put upon his Clergy —— Yes indeed, I enquir'd of the Law in that case before I wou'd meddle or make.

Lady. What, then I have been your Property, have I? I have been convenient to you it seems; —— while you were catering for *Mirabell*; I have been Broaker for you? What, have you made a passive Bawd of me? —— this exceeds all Precedent; I am brought to fine Uses, to become a Botcher of second-hand Marriages,

riages, between *Abigails* and *Andrews!* I'll couple you. Yes, I'll baſte you together, you and your *Philander*. I'll *Dukes-Place* you, as I'm a Perſon. Your Turtle is in Cuſtody already: You ſhall Coo in the ſame Cage, if there be Conſtable or Warrant in the Pariſh. [*Exit.*

Foib. O that ever I was born, O that I was ever marry'd,——a Bride, ay I ſhall be a *Bridewell*-Bride. Oh!

Enter Mrs. Fainall.

Mrs. *Fain.* Poor *Foible*, what's the matter?

Foib. O Madam, my Lady's gone for a Conſtable; I ſhall be had to a Juſtice, and put to *Bridewell* to beat Hemp; poor *Waitwell*'s gone to Priſon already.

Mrs. *Fain.* Have a good Heart, *Foible*, *Mirabell*'s gone to give Security for him, this is all *Marwood*'s and my Husband's doing.

Foib. Yes, yes; I know it, Madam; ſhe was in my Lady's Cloſet, and over-heard all that you ſaid to me before Dinner. She ſent the Letter to my Lady, and that miſſing Effect, Mr. *Fainall* laid this Plot to arreſt *Waitwell*, when he pretended to go for the Papers; and in the mean time Mrs. *Marwood* declar'd all to my Lady.

Mrs. *Fain.* Was there no Mention made of me in the Letter?——My Mother does not ſuſpect my being in the Confederacy? I fancy *Marwood* has not told her, tho' ſhe has told my Husband.

Foib. Yes, Madam; but my Lady did not ſee that Part: We ſtifled the Letter before ſhe read ſo far. Has that miſchievous Devil told Mr. *Fainall* of your Ladiſhip then?

Mrs. *Fain.* Ay, all's out, my Affair with *Mirabell*, every thing diſcover'd. This is the laſt Day of our living together, that's my Comfort.

Foib. Indeed Madam, and ſo 'tis a Comfort if you knew all,—he has been even with your Ladiſhip; which I cou'd have told you long enough ſince, but I love to keep Peace and Quietneſs by my good Will: I had rather bring Friends together, than ſet 'em at Diſtance. But Mrs. *Marwood* and he are nearer related than ever their Parents thought for.

Mrs. *Fain.* Say'ſt thou ſo, *Foible?* Canſt thou prove this?

Foib. I can take my Oath of it, Madam, ſo can Mrs. *Mincing*; we have had many a fair Word from Madam *Marwood*, to conceal ſomething that paſs'd in our Chamber one Evening when you were at *Hide-Park*;——and we were thought to have gone a Walking: But we went up unawares,——tho' we were ſworn to Secreſie too; Madam *Marwood* took a Book and ſwore us upon

it: But it was but a Book of Verſes and Poems,——So long as it was not a Bible-Oath, we may break it with a ſafe Conſcience.

Mrs. *Fain.* This Diſcovery is the moſt opportune Thing I cou'd wiſh. Now *Mincing?*

Enter Mincing.

Minc. My Lady wou'd ſpeak with Mrs. *Foible*, *Mem.* Mr. *Mirabell* is with her; he has ſet your Spouſe at liberty, Mrs. *Foible*, and wou'd have you hide your ſelf in my Lady's Cloſet, 'till my old Lady's Anger is abated. O, my old Lady is in a perilous Paſſion, at ſomething Mr. *Fainall* has ſaid, he ſwears, and my old Lady cries. There's a fearful Hurricane I vow. He ſays *Mem*; how that he'll have my Lady's Fortune made over to him, or he'll be divorc'd.

Mrs. *Fain.* Does your Lady and *Mirabell* know that?

Minc. Yes *Mem*, they have ſent me to ſee if Sir *Willfull* be ſober, and to bring him to them. My Lady is reſolv'd to have him I think, rather than loſe ſuch a vaſt Sum as Six Thouſand Pound. O, come Mrs. *Foible*, I hear my old Lady.

Mrs. *Fain.* *Foible*, you muſt tell *Mincing*, that ſhe muſt prepare to vouch when I call her.

Foib. Yes, yes, Madam.

Minc. O yes *Mem*, I'll vouch any thing for your Ladiſhip's Service, be what it will. [*Exeunt* Minc. *and* Foib.

Enter Lady *and* Marwood.

Lady. O my dear Friend, how can I enumerate the Benefits that I have receiv'd from your Goodneſs? To you I owe the timely Diſcovery of the falſe Vows of *Mirabell*; to you the Detection of the Impoſtor Sir *Rowland*. And now you are become an Interceſſor with my Son-in-Law, to ſave the Honour of my Houſe, and compound for the Frailties of my Daughter. Well Friend, You are enough to reconcile me to the bad World, or elſe I would retire to Deſarts and Solitudes; and feed harmleſs Sheep by Groves and purling Streams. Dear *Marwood*, let us leave the World, and retire by our ſelves and be Shepherdeſſes.

Mrs. *Mar.* Let us firſt diſpatch the Affair in hand, Madam, we ſhall have Leiſure to think of Retirement afterwards. Here is one who is concern'd in the Treaty.

Lady. O Daughter, Daughter, is it poſſible thou ſhould'ſt be my Child, Bone of my Bone, and Fleſh of my Fleſh, and as I may ſay, another Me, and yet tranſgreſs the moſt minute Particle of ſevere Virtue? Is it poſſible you ſhould lean aſide to Iniquity, who have been caſt in the direct Mold of Virtue? I have not only

ly been a Mold but a Pattern for you, and a Model for you, after you were brought into the World.

Mrs. *Fain.* I don't understand your Ladiſhip.

Lady. Not understand? Why have you not been Naught? Have you not been Sophiſticated? Not understand? Here I am ruin'd to compound for your *Caprices* and your *Cuckoldoms*. I muſt pawn my Plate and my Jewels, and ruin my Neice, and all little enough———

Mrs. *Fain.* I am wrong'd and abus'd, and ſo are you. 'Tis a falſe Accuſation, as falſe as Hell, as falſe as your Friend there, ay or your Friend's Friend, my falſe Husband.

Mrs. *Mar.* My Friend, Mrs. *Fainall?* Your Husband my Friend, what do you mean?

Mrs *Fain* I know what I mean, Madam, and ſo do you, and ſo ſhall the World at a Time convenient.

Mrs. *Mar.* I am ſorry to ſee you ſo paſſionate, Madam. More Temper would look more like Innocence. But I have done. I am ſorry my Zeal to ſerve your Ladiſhip and Family, ſhould admit of Miſconſtruction, or make me liable to Affronts. You will pardon me, *Madam*, if I meddle no more with an Affair, in which I am not perſonally concern'd.

Lady. O dear Friend, I am ſo aſham'd that you ſhould meet with ſuch Returns;——You ought to ask Pardon on your Knees, ungrateful Creature; ſhe deſerves more from you, than all your Life can accompliſh——O don't leave me deſtitute in this Perplexity;—No, ſtick to me, my good Genius.

Mrs. *Fain.* I tell you, Madam, you're abus'd——Stick to you? ay, like a Leach, to ſuck your beſt Blood—ſhe'll drop off when ſhe's full. Madam, you ſhan't pawn a Bodkin, nor part with a Braſs Counter, in Compoſition for me. I defie 'em all. Let 'em prove their Aſperſions: I know my own Innocence, and dare ſtand by a Trial. [*Exit.*

Lady. Why, if ſhe ſhou'd be innocent, if ſhe ſhou'd be wrong'd after all, ha? I don't know what to think,—and I promiſe you, her Education has been unexceptionable——I may ſay it; for I chiefly made it my own Care to initiate her very Infancy in the Rudiments of Virtue, and to impreſs upon her tender Years a Young Odium and Averſion to the very Sight of Men,———ay Friend, ſhe wou'd ha' ſhriek'd if ſhe had but ſeen a Man, 'till ſhe was in her Teens. As I'm a Perſon 'tis true——She was never ſuffer'd to play with a Male-Child, tho' but in Coats; Nay her very Babies were of the *Feminine Gender*,—O, ſhe never look'd a

Man in the Face but her own Father, or the Chaplain, and him we made a ſhift to put upon her for a Woman, by the help of his long Garments, and his ſleek Face; 'till ſhe was going in her Fifteen.

Mrs. *Mar.* 'Twas much ſhe ſhould be deceiv'd ſo long.

Lady. I warrant you, or ſhe would never have born to have been Catechiz'd by him; and have heard his long Lectures againſt Singing and Dancing, and ſuch Debaucheries; and going to filthy Plays; and prophane Muſick-meetings, where the Lewd Trebles ſqueek nothing but Bawdy, and the Baſes roar Blaſphemy. O, ſhe would have ſwoon'd at the Sight or Name of an obſcene Play-Book —— and can I think after all this, that my Daughter can be Naught? What, a Whore? And thought it Excommunication to ſet her Foot within the Door of a Play-houſe. O my dear Friend, I can't believe it, no, no; as ſhe ſays, let him prove it, let him prove it.

Mrs. *Mar.* Prove it, Madam? What, and have your Name proſtituted in a publick Court; yours and your Daughter's Reputation worry'd at the Bar by a Pack of Bawling Lawyers? To be uſher'd in with an *O Yes* of Scandal; and have your Caſe open'd by an old fumbling Leacher in a Quoif like a Man Midwife, to bring your Daughter's Infamy to Light, to be a Theme for legal Punſters, and Quiblers by the Statute; and become a Jeſt, againſt a Rule of Court, where there is no Precedent for a Jeſt in any Record; not even in *Dooms-day-Book:* To diſcompoſe the Gravity of the Bench, and provoke naughty Interrogatories in more naughty Law *Latin*; while the good Judge tickl'd with the Proceeding, ſimpers under a Grey Beard, and fidges off and on his Cuſhion as if he had ſwallow'd *Cantharides*, or ſate upon *Cow-Itch.*

Lady. O, 'tis very hard!

Mrs. *Mar.* And then to have my Young Revellers of the *Temple* take Notes, like Prentices at a Conventicle; and after talk it all over again in Commons, or before Drawers in an Eating-Houſe.

Lady. Worſe and worſe.

Mrs. *Mar.* Nay this is nothing; if it would end here 'twere well. But it muſt after this be conſign'd by the Short-hand Writers to the publick Preſs; and from thence be transferr'd to the Hands nay into the Throats and Lungs of Hawkers, with Voices more Licentious than the loud Flounder-man's, or the Woman that cries Grey-Peaſe; and this you muſt hear 'till you are ſtunn'd; nay, you muſt hear nothing elſe for ſome Days.

Lady.

Lady. O, 'tis insupportable, No, no, dear Friend, make it up, make it up; ay, ay, I'll Compound. I'll give up all, my self and my all, my Neice and her all——any thing, every thing for Composition.

Mrs. *Mar.* Nay, Madam, I advise nothing, I only lay before you, as a Friend, the Inconveniencies which perhaps you have overseen. Here comes Mr. *Fainall.* If he will be satisfy'd to huddle up all in Silence, I shall be glad. You must think I would rather Congratulate than Condole with you.

Enter Fainall.

Lady. Ay, ay, I do not doubt it, dear *Marwood*: No, no, I do not doubt it.

Fain. Well, Madam; I have suffer'd my self to be overcome by the Importunity of this Lady your Friend, and am content you shall enjoy your own proper Estate during Life; on Condition you oblige your self never to Marry, under such Penalty as I think convenient.

Lady. Never to Marry?

Fain. No more Sir *Rowlands*,——the next Imposture may not be so timely detected.

Mrs. *Mar.* That Condition, I dare answer, my Lady will consent to, without Difficulty; she has already but too much experienc'd the Perfidiousness of Men. Besides, Madam, when we retire to our Pastoral Solitude we shall bid adieu to all other Thoughts.

Lady. Ay, that's true; but in Case of Necessity, as of Health, or some such Emergency———

Fain. O, if you are prescrib'd Marriage, you shall be consider'd; I will only reserve to my self the Power to chuse for you. If your Physick be wholsome, it matters not who is your Apothecary. Next, my Wife shall settle on me the Remainder of her Fortune, not made over already; and for her Maintenance depend entirely on my Discretion.

Lady. This is most inhumanly Savage, exceeding the Barbarity of a *Muscovite* Husband.

Fain. I learn'd it from his *Czarish* Majesty's Retinue, in a Winter Evening's Conference over Brandy and Pepper, amongst other Secrets of Matrimony and Policy, as they are at present Practis'd in the Northern Hemisphere. But this must be agreed unto, and that positively. Lastly, I will be endow'd in right of my Wife, with that Six Thousand Pound, which is the Moiety of Mrs. *Millamant*'s Fortune in your Possession: And which she has forfeited (as will appear by the last Will and Testament of your deceas'd

Husband.

Husband, Sir *Jonathan Wishfort*) by her Disobedience in Contracting her self against your Consent or Knowledge; and by refusing the offer'd Match with Sir *Willfull Witwood*, which you, like a careful Aunt, had provided for her.

Lady. My Nephew was *non Compos*, and could not make his Addresses.

Fain. I come to make Demands,—I'll hear no Objections.

Lady. You will grant me Time to consider.

Fain. Yes, while the Instrument is drawing, to which you must set your Hand 'till more sufficient Deeds can be perfected, which I will take care shall be done with all possible speed. In the mean while, I will go for the said Instrument, and 'till my Return you may ballance this Matter in your own Discretion. [*Exit.* Fain.

Lady. This Insolence is beyond all Precedent, all Parallel; must I be subject to this mercileſs Villain?

Mrs. *Mar.* 'Tis severe indeed, Madam, that you should smart for your Daughter's Wantonness.

Lady. 'Twas against my Consent that she marry'd this Barbarian, but she would have him, tho' her Year was not out.—Ah! her first Husband, my Son *Languish*, would not have carry'd it thus. Well, that was my Choice, this is hers; she is match'd now with a Witness——I shall be mad, dear Friend, is there no Comfort for me? Must I live to be confiscated at this Rebel-rate?——Here come two more of my *Egyptian* Plagues too.

Enter Millamant *and Sir* Willfull.

Sir *Will.* Aunt, your Servant.

Lady. Out *Caterpillar*, call not me Aunt; I know thee not.

Sir *Will.* I confess I have been a little in Disguise, as they say,—'Sheart! and I'm sorry for't. What would you have? I hope I committed no Offence, Aunt——and if I did I am willing to make Satisfaction; and what can a Man say fairer? If I have broke any thing I'll pay for't, an it cost a Pound. And so let that content for what's past, and make no more Words. For what's to come, to pleasure you I'm willing to marry my Cousin. So pray let's all be Friends, she and I are agreed upon the Matter before a Witness.

Lady. How's this, dear Neice? Have I any Comfort? Can this be true?

Milla. I am content to be a Sacrifice to your Repose, Madam; and to convince you that I had no Hand in the Plot, as you were misinform'd, I have laid my Commands on *Mirabell* to come in Person, and be a Witness that I give my Hand to this Flower of *Knighthood*; and for the Contract that pass'd between *Mirabell*

and

and me, I have oblig'd him to make a Reſignation of it in your Ladiſhip's Preſence; —— He is without, and waits your leave for Admittance.

Lady. Well, I'll ſwear I am ſomething reviv'd at this Teſtimony of your Obedience, but I cannot admit that Traitor, —— I fear I cannot fortifie my ſelf to ſupport his Appearance. He is as terrible to me as a *Gorgon*; if I ſee him I fear I ſhall turn to Stone, petrifie inceſſantly.

Milla. If you diſoblige him he may reſent your Refuſal, and inſiſt upon the Contract ſtill. Then 'tis the laſt time he will be offenſive to you.

Lady. Are you ſure it will be the laſt time? —— If I were ſure of that —— ſhall I never ſee him again?

Milla. Sir *Willfull*, you and he are to Travel together, are you not?

Sir *Will.* 'Sheart the Gentleman's a civil Gentleman, Aunt, let him come in; why we are ſworn Brothers and Fellow-Travellers. —— We are to be *Pylades* and *Oreſtes*, he and I —— He is to be my Interpreter in Foreign Parts. He has been Over-ſeas once already; and with *proviſo* that I marry my Couſin, will croſs 'em once again, only to bear me Company. —— 'Sheart, I'll call him in, —— an I ſet on't once, he ſhall come in; and ſee who'll hinder him. [*Exit.*

Mrs. *Mar.* This is precious Fooling, if it would paſs, but I'll know the Bottom of it.

Lady. O dear *Marwood*, you are not going?

Mar. Not far, Madam; I'll return immediately. [*Exit.*

Re-enter Sir Willfull *and* Mirabell.

Sir *Will.* Look up, Man, I'll ſtand by you, 'sbud an ſhe do frown, ſhe can't kill you; —— Beſides — harkee ſhe dare not frown deſperately, becauſe her Face is none of her own; 'Sheart and ſhe ſhou'd her Forehead wou'd wrinkle like the Coat of a Cream-cheeſe, but mum for that, Fellow-Traveller.

Mira. If a deep ſenſe of the many Injuries I have offer'd to ſo good a Lady, with a ſincere Remorſe, and a hearty Contrition, can but obtain the leaſt Glance of Compaſſion, I am too happy, —— Ah Madam, there was a time —— But let it be forgotten — I confeſs I have deſervedly forfeited the high Place I once held, of ſighing at your Feet; nay kill me not, by turning from me in Diſdain, — I come not to plead for Favour; — Nay not for Pardon, I am a Suppliant only for your Pity —— I am going where I never ſhall behold you more ——

Sir *Will.* How, Fellow-Traveller! — You ſhall go by your ſelf then.

Mira.

Mira. Let me be pitied first; and afterwards forgotten—— I ask no more.

Sir *Will.* By'r Lady a very reasonable Request; and will cost you nothing, Aunt—Come, come, forgive and forget Aunt, why you must an you are a Christian.

Mira. Consider Madam, in reality, you cou'd not receive much Prejudice; it was an Innocent Device; tho' I confess it had a Face of Guiltiness,—It was at most an Artifice which Love contriv'd—And Errors which Love produces have ever been accounted *Venial.* At least think it is Punishment enough, that I have lost what in my Heart I hold most dear, that to your cruel Indignation, I have offer'd up this Beauty, and with her my Peace and Quiet; nay all my Hopes of future Comfort.

Sir *Will.* An he do's not move me, wou'd I might never be *O' the Quorum*—An it were not as good a Deed as to drink, to give her to him again,——I wou'd I might never take Shipping.——Aunt, if you don't forgive quickly, I shall melt, I can tell you that. My Contract went no further than a little Mouth-Glew, and that's hardly dry;——One doleful Sigh more from my Fellow-Traveller and 'tis dissolv'd.

Lady. Well Nephew, upon your Account——Ah, he has a false Insinuating Tongue——Well Sir, I will stifle my just Resentment at my Nephew's Request.——I will endeavour what I can to forget,——but on *proviso* that you resign the Contract with my Neice immediately.

Mira. It is in Writing and with Papers of Concern; but I have sent my Servant for it, and will deliver it to you, with all Acknowledgments for your transcendent Goodness.

Lady. Oh, he has Witchcraft in his Eyes and Tongue;—— When I did not see him I could have bribe'd a Villain to his Assassination; but his Appearance rakes the Embers which have so long lain smother'd in my Breast.——[*Apart.*]

Enter Fainall *and Mrs.* Marwood.

Fain. Your Date of Deliberation, Madam, is expir'd. Here is the Instrument, are you prepar'd to sign?

Lady. If I were prepar'd, I am not impower'd. My Neice exerts a lawful Claim, having match'd her self by my Direction to Sir *Wilfull.*

Fain. That Sham is too gross to pass on me——tho' 'tis impos'd on you, Madam.

Milla. Sir, I have given my Consent.

Mira. And, Sir, I have resign'd my Pretensions.

Sir *Will.* And, Sir, I assert my Right; and will maintain it in defiance

of

of you Sir, and of your Inſtrument. S'heart an you talk of an Inſtrument Sir, I have an old Fox by my Thigh ſhall hack your Inſtrument of *Ram Vellam* to Shreds, Sir. It ſhall not be ſufficient for a *Mittimus* or a Tailor's Meaſure; therefore withdraw your Inſtrument Sir, or by'r Lady I ſhall draw mine.

Lady. Hold, Nephew, hold.

Milla. Good Sir *Willfull* reſpite your Valour.

Fain. Indeed? Are you provided of your Guard, with your ſingle Beef-eater there? But I'm prepar'd for you; and Inſiſt upon my firſt Propoſal. You ſhall ſubmit your own Eſtate to my Management, and abſolutely make over my Wife's to my ſole uſe; as purſuant to the Purport and Tenor of this other Covenant. —— I ſuppoſe, Madam, your Conſent is not requiſite in this Caſe; nor, Mr. *Mirabell*, your Reſignation; nor, Sir *Willfull*, your Right —You may draw your Fox if you pleaſe Sir, and make a *Bear-Garden* flouriſh ſomewhere elſe: For here it will not avail. This, my Lady *Wiſhfort*, muſt be ſubſcrib'd, or your Darling Daughter's turn'd a-drift, like a leaky Hulk to ſink or ſwim, as ſhe and the Current of this lewd Town can agree.

Lady. Is there no Means, no Remedy, to ſtop my Ruin? Ungrateful Wretch! doſt thou not owe thy Being, thy Subſiſtance to my Daughter's Fortune?

Fain. I'll anſwer you when I have the reſt of it in my Poſſeſſion.

Mira. But that you wou'd not accept of a Remedy from my Hands ——— I own I have not deſerv'd you ſhou'd owe any Obligation to me; or elſe perhaps I cou'd adviſe, ———

Lady. O what? what? to ſave me and my Child from Ruin, from Want, I'll forgive all that's paſt; nay I'll conſent to any Thing to come, to be deliver'd from this Tyranny.

Mira. Ay Madam; but that is too late, my Reward is intercepted. You have diſpos'd of her, who only cou'd have made me a Compenſation for all my Services; ——— But be it as it may, I am reſolv'd I'll ſerve you, you ſhall not be wrong'd in this Savage manner.

Lady. How! Dear Mr. *Mirabell*, can you be ſo generous at laſt! But it is not poſſible. Harkee, I'll break my Nephew's Match, you ſhall have my Neice yet, and all her Fortune; if you can but ſave me from this imminent Danger.

Mira. Will you? I take you at your Word. I aſk no more. I muſt have leave for Two Criminals to appear.

Lady. Ay, ay, any body, any body.

Mira. *Foible* is one, and a Penitent.

Enter Mrs. Fainall, Foible, *and* Mincing.

Mrs. *Mar.* O my Shame! theſe corrupt things are bought and brought hither to expoſe me. [*to* Fain. { Mira *and Lady go to* *Mrs.* Fain. *and* Foib.

Fain. If it muſt all come out, why let 'em know it, 'tis but the *Way of the World.* That ſhall not urge me to relinquiſh or abate one Tittle of my Terms, no, I will inſiſt the more.

Foib. Yes indeed Madam; I'll take my Bible-oath of it.

Minc. And ſo will I *Mem.*

Lady. O *Marwood, Marwood,* art thou falſe? my Friend deceive me? Haſt thou been a wicked Accomplice with that profligate Man?

Mrs. *Mar.* Have you ſo much Ingratitude and Injuſtice, to give Credit againſt you Friend, to the Aſperſions of Two ſuch mercenary Truls?

Minc. Mercenary, *Mem?* I ſcorn your Words. 'Tis true we found you and Mr. *Fainall* in the blue Garret; by the ſame Token, you ſwore us to Secreſie upon *Meſſalinas*'s Poems. Mercenary? No, if we wou'd have been Mercenary, we ſhou'd have held our Tongues; You wou'd have brib'd us ſufficiently.

Fain. Go, you are an Inſignificant thing. —— Well, what are you the better for this! Is this Mr. *Mirabell*'s Expedient? I'll be put off no longer —— You Thing that was a Wife, ſhall ſmart for this. I will not leave thee wherewithall to hide thy Shame: Your Body ſhall be Naked as your Reputation.

Mrs. *Fain.* I deſpiſe you, and defie your Malice —— You have aſpers'd me wrongfully —— I have prov'd your Falſhhood —— Go you and your treacherous —— I will not name it, but ſtarve together —— Periſh.

Fain. Not while you are worth a Groat, indeed my Dear. Madam, I'll be fool'd no longer.

Lady. Ah Mr. *Mirabell,* this is ſmall Comfort, the Detection of this Affair.

Mira. O in good time —— Your leave for the other Offender and Penitent to appear, Madam.

Enter Waitwell *with a Box of Writings.*

Lady. O Sir *Rowland* —— Well, Raſcal.

Wait. What your Ladiſhip pleaſes. —I have brought the Black-Box at laſt, Madam.

Mira. Give it me. Madam, you remember your Promiſe.

Lady. I, dear Sir!

Mira. Where are the Gentlemen?

Wait. At hand Sir, rubbing their Eyes, —— Juſt riſen from Sleep.

Fain. S'death what's this to me? I'll not wait your private Concerns.

Enter Petulant *and* Witwoud.

Pet. How now? What's the matter? who's Hand's out?

Wit. Hey day! what are you all got together, like Players at the End of the laſt Act?

Mira. You may remember, Gentlemen, I once requeſted your hands as Witneſſes to a certain Parchment.

Wit.

Wit. Ay I do, my Hand I remember——*Petulant* ſet his Mark.

Mir. You wrong him, his Name is fairly written, as ſhall appear—You do not remember, Gentlemen, any thing of what that Parchment contain'd—— [*Undoing the Box.*

Wit. No. *Pet.* Not I. I writ, I read nothing.

Mira. Very well, now you ſhall know——Madam, your Promiſe.

Lady. Ay, ay, Sir, upon my Honour.

Mira. Mr. *Fainall*, it is now Time that you ſhou'd know, that your Lady, while ſhe was at her own Diſpoſal, and before you had by your Inſinuations wheadl'd her out of a pretended Settlement of the greateſt Part of her Fortune——

Fain. Sir! pretended!

Mira. Yes, Sir. I ſay that this Lady while a Widow, having it ſeems receiv'd ſome Cautions reſpecting your Inconſtancy and Tyranny of Temper, which from her own partial Opinion and Fondneſs of you ſhe cou'd never have ſuſpected—ſhe did, I ſay, by the wholeſome Advice of Friends and of Sages learn'd in the Laws of this Land, deliver this ſame as her Act and Deed to me in Truſt, and to the Uſes within mention'd. You may read if you pleaſe—[*Holding out the Parchment.*] tho' perhaps what is inſcrib'd on the Back may ſerve your Occaſions.

Fain. Very likely, Sir. What's here? Damnation?

[*Reads.*] *A Deed of Conveyance of the whole Eſtate real of* Arabella Languiſh, *Widow, in Truſt to* Edward Mirabell.

Confuſion!

Mira. Even ſo, Sir; 'tis *the Way of the World*, Sir; of the Widows of the World. I ſuppoſe this Deed may bear an elder Date than what you have obtain'd from your Lady.

Fain. Perfidious Fiend! then thus I'll be reveng'd.——

[*Offers to run at Mrs.* Fain.

Sir *Will.* Hold, Sir, now you may make your *Bear-Garden* Flouriſh ſomewhere elſe, Sir.

Fain. Mirabell, you ſhall hear of this, Sir, be ſure you ſhall.—— Let me paſs, Oaf. [*Exit.*

Mrs. *Fain.* Madam, you ſeem to ſtifle your Reſentment: You had better give it Vent.

Mrs. *Mar.* Yes, it ſhall have Vent——and to your Confuſion, or I'll periſh in the Attempt. [*Exit.*

Lady. O Daughter, Daughter, 'tis plain thou haſt inherited thy Mother's Prudence.

Mrs. *Fain.* Thank Mr. *Mirabell*, a cautious Friend, to whoſe Advice all is owing.

Lady. Well Mr. *Mirabell*, you have kept your Promiſe—and I muſt perform

perform mine.——First I pardon for your ſake Sir *Rowland* there and *Foible*,——The next thing is to break the Matter to my Nephew—and how to do that——

Mira. For that, Madam, give your ſelf no Trouble,——let me have your Conſent—Sir *Willfull* is my Friend; he has had Compaſſion upon Lovers, and generouſly engag'd a Volunteer in this Action, for our Service, and now deſigns to proſecute his Travels.

Sir *Will.* 'Sheart, Aunt, I have no mind to marry. My Couſin's a fine Lady, and the Gentleman loves her and ſhe loves him, and they deſerve one another; my Reſolution is to ſee Foreign Parts—I have ſet on't—and when I'm ſet on't, I muſt do't. And if theſe two Gentlemen wou'd travel too, I think they may be ſpar'd.

Pet. For my part, I ſay little——I think things are beſt off or on.

Wit. I gad I underſtand nothing of the matter,——I'm in a Maze yet, like a Dog in a Dancing School.

Lady. Well Sir, take her, and with her all the Joy I can give you.

Milla. Why does not the Man take me? Wou'd you have me give my ſelf to you over again?

Mira. Ay, and over and over again; [*Kiſſes her Hand.*] I would have you as often as poſſibly I can. Well, Heav'n grant I love you not too well, that's all my Fear.

Sir *Will.* 'Sheart you'll have him time enough to toy after you're marry'd; or if you will toy now, let us have a Dance in the mean time, that we who are not Lovers may have ſome other Employment, beſides looking on.

Mira. With all my heart, dear Sir *Willfull*; what ſhall we do for Muſick?

Foib. O Sir, ſome that were provided for Sir *Rowland*'s Entertainment are yet within Call. [*A Dance.*

Lady. As I am a Perſon I can hold out no longer;—I have waſted my Spirits ſo to Day already, that I am ready to ſink under the Fatigue; and I cannot but have ſome Fears upon me yet, that my Son *Fainall* will purſue ſome deſperate Courſe.

Mira. Madam, diſquiet not your ſelf on that account; to my knowledge his Circumſtances are ſuch, he muſt of Force comply. For my part I will contribute all that in me lyes to a Reunion: In the mean time, Madam, [*To Mrs.* Fain.] let me before theſe Witneſſes reſtore to you this Deed of Truſt; it may be a Means, well manag'd, to make you live eaſily together.

From hence let thoſe be warn'd, who mean to wed;
Leſt mutual Falſhood ſtain the Bridal-Bed:
For each Deceiver to his Coſt may find,
That Marriage Frauds too oft are paid in kind. [Exeunt Omnes.

FINIS.